

Armenians and Russia

(1626-1796)

A Documentary Record

Annotated Translation and Commentary
by

George A. Bournoutian

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To Sérgio

L'amour est aveugle; l'amitié ferme les yeux

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George Bournoutian
Iona College
September 2000

Abbreviated Titles

- AANR* *Arkhiv Akademii Nauk Rossii* [Archives of the Academy of Sciences of Russia, Moscow].
- AANG* *Arkhiv Akademii Nauk Gruzii* [Archives of the Academy of Sciences of Georgia, Tbilisi].
- AKAK* *Akty sobrannye Kavkazskoiu Arkheograficheskoiu Kommissiei* [Proceedings of the Caucasian Archaeographical Commission: Archives of the Viceroy for the Caucasus], vols. I-II (Tiflis, 1866-1868).
- AKVB* *Arkhiv Kniazia Vorontsova* [Archives of Prince Vorontsov] P. Bartenev, ed. 40 volumes (Moscow, 1870-1895).
- AVPR* *Arkhiv Vneshnei Politiki Rossii* [Archives of the Foreign Policy of Russia, Moscow].
- Diwan* *Diwan Hayots' patmut'ean* [Archives of Armenian History], Giwt Aghaneants' ed., Bk. IV (Tiflis, 1899).
- Ezov* *Snosheniia Petra Velikago s' armianskim' narodom'* [Documents on the Relation of Peter the Great with the Armenian People], (St. Petersburg, 1898).
- GAAO* *Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Astrakhanskoi Oblasti* [State Archives of the Astrakhan Province].

- Gramoty* *Gramoty i drugie istoricheskie dokumenty XVIII stoletia otnosiashchieisia do Gruzii* [Decrees and Other Eighteenth-Century Historical Documents Relating to Georgia], Vol. II, pt. 2 (St. Petersburg, 1902).
- POII* *Peterburgskii otdel' Institut Istorii* [Archives of the St. Petersburg Division of the Institute of History of the Academy of Sciences of Russia].
- MAAC* *Matenadaran Archives, Erevan, Armenia.*
- PSZR* *Polnoe sobranie zakonov Rossiskoi Imperii* [The Complete Collection of the Statutes of the Russian Empire], Series I (Moscow, 1830).
- SAAN* *Sobranie aktov' otnosiashchikhsia k' obozreniiu istorii armianskago naroda* [Collection of Documents on the History of the Armenian People], 3 vols. (Moscow, 1833-1838).
- SUVO* *Alexander Vasil'evich Suvorov: Dokumenty*, 2 vols. (Moscow 1951).
- TsGADA* *Tsentral'nyi Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Drevnikh Aktov* [Central State Archives of Ancient Decrees, Moscow].
- TsGIA* *Tsentral'nyi Gosudarstvennyi Istoricheskii Arkhiv* [Central State Historical Archives, St. Petersburg].
- TsGVIA* *Tsentral'nyi Gosudarstvennyi Voennno-Istoricheskii Arkhiv* [Central State Archives of Military History, Moscow].

Chronology, Toponyms, Transliteration

Until February 1918, Russia employed the Julian calendar, which in the seventeenth century was ten days, and in the eighteenth century eleven days, behind the Gregorian calendar used in the West. Except where indicated, all Russian documents retain their original Julian dates. Documents of Moscovite or pre-Petrine Russia, at times, use dates that are calculated from the creation of the world, which they assumed, began 5508 years before the birth of Christ. Hence a document dated 7134 was written in 1626. In addition, numerals indicating thousands were sometimes left out in certain documents, thus they may be dated as written in the year 134. Persia, in the period covered here, used the Arabic lunar calendar (beginning in A.D. 622), while Armenian Church records generally used the Armenian religious calendar, dating from A.D. 552. These have been converted (outright or in brackets) to the Gregorian calendar.

Toponyms can be a source of confusion. I have attempted to identify and use the local pronunciation of place names.¹ Those toponyms that could not be identified have been transliterated exactly as they appear in the Russian form. Despite the fact that the term *Transcaucasia* (or Trans-Caucasus) denotes a Russian bias, I have decided to retain this more commonly used term instead of *Transaraxia* or *eastern Caucasus*. The terms *Persia* and *Persian* will be used instead of *Iran* and *Iranian*. I use the designation *eastern Armenia* as encompassing the historic Armenian lands situated east of the city of Kars, west of the Kura River, south of the Khram River, and north of the Arax River up to Nakhichevan, where it continues in a straight line to include both sides of the Arax, embracing the towns of Mākū and Bayazid.

Transliteration poses the biggest challenge, for no method has proven ideal or has been universally adopted for the various languages used in this study. Armenian terms have been transliterated according to a slightly modified version of the Library of Congress system.² The same

¹I have, however, used Dnieper instead of Dneper and Dniester instead of Dnester.

²Transliteration of Armenian names can be confusing. Seventeenth- and eighteenth-century orthography differs from twentieth century spelling. In addi-

system (also modified) is used for Russian, Arabic, and Turkish titles.³ With few exceptions, first names (but not the patronymic) of Russian rulers and officials are Anglicized, thus Catherine and not Ekaterina, Alexander and not Aleksandr, Nicholas and not Nikolai. Names of Russian officials who were originally from Europe are (if known) spelled in their Latin form in the footnotes. Most of the Armenians living in Russia or in the service of Russia Russianized their names. Most Armenian names are, therefore, transliterated exactly as they appear in the documents. Their original names, if known, appear in the footnotes or parentheses. The transliteration for Persian, with minor deviations, follows that of the *Encyclopædia Iranica*.⁴ Transliteration from Georgian is based on the system used by D. M. Lang in, *The Last Years of the Georgian Monarchy*. Commonly used terms and Anglicized or Russianized form of the toponyms in all of these languages are retained, however (e.g., amir, bazaar, khan, khanate, melik, mullah, pasha, shah, sheikh, sultan, tsar, vali, vizier, Afshar, Azerbaijan, Baku, Daghestan, Derbent, Enzeli, Erevan, Ganja, Hamadan, Isfahan, Julfa, Karabagh, Khorasan, Lesghian, Mashhad, Muslim, Nakhichevan, Qajar, Qazvin, Rasht, Safavid, Shakki, Shemakhi, Shi'i, Shiraz, Shirvan, Shushi, Sunni, Tabriz, Tiflis, and Zand).

tion, there are pronunciation differences between Eastern and Western Armenian. The Eastern Armenian form of proper names is, for the most part, used in this study. Furthermore different transcriptions are employed for certain authors' names as they appear in their studies printed in different languages, thus Hakobian, Hakopian, Akopian, Hakobean, Hakobyan, and Hovhannēsean, Hovhannisian, Yovhannēsean, Ioannisian, Hovannisian, and Hovhannisian.

³Russian, Armenian, Persian, and Turkish documents use different forms for some personal names. For example Joseph is Iosif in Russian, Hovsēp in Armenian, and Yūsef or Yusuf in Persian and Turkish. I have tried, whenever possible, to use the native pronunciation of personal names, with the variant initially in parentheses. When in doubt, I have transliterated the names exactly as they appear in the documents. Names of Armenians or others, who preferred to use or are better known by their Russianized names remain unchanged, hence Lazarev instead of Lazarean or Ghazarean and Argutinskii instead of Arghut'ean, Tarkhan instead of T'arkhan, Vartan instead of Vardan, etc.

⁴Certain titles and names are transliterated in two versions—depending whether the Persian, Arabic, or Turkish form was used in the document—for example, *beg* and *bek*; *āqā* and *ağa*; *Ebrāhīm* and *Ibrahim*; *Salīm* and *Selim*, *Karīm* and *Kerim*; *Moḥammad*, *Muḥammad*, and *Mehmet*, *Soleimān* and *Suleiman*.

Introduction

Archival evidence of Armenian relations with Russia starts during the reign of Tsar Michael (1613-1645), the founder of the Romanov dynasty. The documentary material presented in this study begins with the earliest Russian archival record concerning the Armenians, written in March 1626, and continues until the death of Catherine the Great in November 1796.

These seventeenth- and eighteenth-century records, published in various collections, consist of two groups: The first group of documents was gathered by Russian and Armenian scholars and was published during the nineteenth century. The earliest of these is a three-volume work edited by S. Glinka, which was published in 1833-1838 by the Lazarev Institute in Moscow.¹ Some three decades later the *Akty sobrannye Kavkazskoiu Arkheograficheskoiu Kommissiei*,² edited by A. Berzhe (Bergé), was published in Tiflis. Volumes I-II, published in 1866-1868, contain a number of useful documents on the Russian involvement in the Caucasus prior to the nineteenth century. Three collections published at the end of the nineteenth century complete this group. The first is a two-volume study focusing on eighteenth-century Georgia, edited by Professor A. Tsagareli of the St. Petersburg University, which was published between 1891-1902.³ The second is a collection of Armenian Church documents edited by Giwt Aghaneants' and published in Tiflis from 1893 until 1913.⁴ The third is a volume edited by G. Ezov', which was published by the Academy of Sciences of St. Petersburg, in 1898, and which deals specifically with Peter the Great and his relations with the Armenians.⁵

¹S. Glinka, *Sobranie aktov' otnosiashchikhsia k' obozreniiu istorii armianskago naroda* (abbreviated hereafter as *SAAN*).

²Abbreviated hereafter as *AKAK*.

³A. A. Tsagareli, *Gramoty i drugie istoricheskie dokumenty XVIII stoletia otnosiashchiesia k' Gruzii* (abbreviated hereafter as *Gramoty*).

⁴*Diwan Hayots' patmut'ean* (abbreviated hereafter as *Diwan*).

⁵G. A. Ezov', *Snosheniia Petra Velikago s' armianskim' narodom'* (abbreviated hereafter as *Ezov*).

The second group of documents was collected by a number of prominent Soviet Armenian historians and published in Erevan primarily during the second half of the twentieth century. The earliest are studies by A. Hovhannisyan (Ioannisian), published by the Erevan State University in 1945 and 1947.¹ In 1950, the Academy of Sciences of Armenia embarked on an ambitious project to compile a collection of documents relating to Armeno-Russian relations from the various Soviet archives. The first volume, edited by Professor V. Parsamyan (Parsamian), covers the seventeenth century and was published in 1953.² The second volume, in two parts, edited by A. Ioannisian (Hovhannisyan), concentrates on the first three decades of the eighteenth century. It was published between 1964-1967.³ The third volume, edited by Professor V. Voskanyan (Voskanian), focuses on the 1730-1760 period. It was published in 1978.⁴ The fourth volume, published in 1990, deals with the 1760-1800 period and was edited by Professor M. Nersisyan (Nersisian).⁵ Meanwhile, in 1968, the Academy of Sciences of Armenia in association with the Matenadaran Archives in Erevan, published a companion volume to the above series, which deals with Armenian volunteers in the Russian army during the eighteenth century. It was edited by Professor H. Khach'atryan (A. Khachatryan).⁶ Georgian academics led by Professor V. S. P'ut'uridze have also published a number of volumes dealing with the Persian documents in the Georgian archives.⁷

The documents collected by these scholars were selected from the Central State Archives of Ancient Acts in Moscow (*TsGADA*); the Archives of the Foreign Policy of Russia in Moscow (*AVPR*); the Central State Archives of Military History in Moscow (*TsGVIA*); the Central State Historical Archives in St. Petersburg (*TsGIA*); the Matenadaran Ar-

¹A. R. Ioannisian, *Iosif Emin and Rossiia i armianskoe osvoboditel'noe dvizhenie v 80-kh godakh XVIII stoletia*.

²V. A. Parsamian, *Armiano-russkie otnosheniia v XVII veke*. A number of documents were also published by A. G. Abrahamyan, *Mi ēj andrkovkasi zhogovurdneri ev hay-rusakan haraberut'iwnneri pat'mutiwnits'* (Erevan, 1953).

³A. R. Ioannisian, *Armiano-russkie otnosheniia v XVIII veke*.

⁴V. K. Voskanian, *Armiano-russkie otnosheniia vo vtorom tridtsatiletii XVIII veka*.

⁵M. G. Nersisian, *Armiano-russkie otnosheniia v XVIII veke, 1760-1800 gg.*

⁶A. N. Khachatryan, *Armianskoe voisko v XVIII veke: Iz istorii armiano-russkogo voennogo sodruzhestva*.

⁷*Persidskie istoricheskie dokumenty v knigokhranilishchakh Gruzii*. Tbilisi, 1961-1977.

chives in Erevan (*MAAC*); the Archives of the Academy of Sciences of Georgia in Tbilisi (*AANG*); the State Archives of Astrakhan (*GAAO*), the Complete Collection of the Statutes of the Russian Empire (*PSZR*), the Archives of the Academy of Sciences of Russia (*AANR*), the Archives of the History Institute of St. Petersburg (*POII*), and the Archives of Prince Vorontsov (*AKVB*).¹

The material in this study, translated into English for the first time, was chosen from over two thousand documents, originally written in Armenian, Russian, Georgian, Persian, French, German, and Latin. These documents have been either ignored or have seldom been used by Western and Armenian narrative historians. Those compilers who printed these documents often retained factual errors, included little analysis of their content, or provided politically correct commentaries. Few deciphered Persian, Turkish or Arabic terms, or phrases in local dialects.

Although some useful monographs exist on the seventeenth century, the eighteenth century has been referred to as one of the dark periods of Armenian history. Most Armenian scholars have side stepped it; those who have tackled the problem have paid less attention to the role of the Georgians, the Persians and the Ottomans in shaping the history of eastern Armenia.

The aim of the present study of 440 documents—400 of them dealing with the eighteenth century—is to provide new information and clarify already familiar events.² A good portion of these documents discusses key events and players outside the Armeno-Russian sphere, which had a crucial effect on the political or socioeconomic history of eastern Armenia.³

¹A number of these archives were renamed after the collapse of the USSR. For example, the *TsGVIA* is now called the Archives of the Military History of Russia.

²The documents are arranged chronologically and are grouped according to the reign of the Russian monarchs.

³In order to gain a clear picture of eastern Armenia in the eighteenth century, one needs to examine the fall of Isfahan, the Afghan occupation of Persia, the efforts of prince Tahmāsp to restore his dynasty, the Ottoman occupation of eastern Armenia, eastern Georgia and northwestern Persia, the rise of Nāder and his campaigns in Transcaucasia, the struggle for the throne after Nāder's assassination, the struggle between Āzād Khan Afghan, Moḥammad Ḥasan Khan Qajar and Fath 'Alī Khan Afshar, Karīm Khan's reign and his policy toward Transcaucasia, the rise of the Qajars, the reigns of T'eimuraz II and his son,

I have chosen to omit or shorten long formal greetings and salutations and other repetitive material. I have sought to explain the various terms used in the local Armenian dialects. I have striven for readability, rather than an exact literal rendering. The stylized Russian, Persian, and Armenian prose of the time has also been modified. The essentials of the documents, however, remain unchanged.

The commentary does not attempt to examine or analyze the countless facts discussed in these many documents. Rather it focuses on crucial demographic, administrative, religious, political and socioeconomic issues. The length of the study necessitated the repetition of certain explanatory footnotes. The maps, the appendix, the glossaries, and the biographical data should assist the reader to identify the numerous personal and place names, as well as the various terms.

I hope that this work, like its companion,¹ will enable students of Armenian, Azerbaijani, Georgian, Kurdish, Persian, Ottoman, and Russian history to gain access to primary sources which are not readily available, or are disjointed and undecipherable. I am certain that they shall find new information that might be useful in their own research. In conclusion, it is my sincere wish that this study will prompt other scholars to translate the thousands of documents and various other archival and primary sources still awaiting examination. Such efforts will foster a better understanding of the political, socioeconomic, and cultural history of the various people who inhabited or still inhabit this fascinating region.

Erekle II, the rivalry among the khans of eastern Caucasus, as well as the various political treaties negotiated during that century.

¹G. Bournoutian, *Russia and the Armenians of Transcaucasia, 1797-1889: A Documentary Record* (Costa Mesa, 1998).

I
(1626-1688)¹

1
*From the Department² of Customs to the
Department of Foreign Affairs*
(26 March 1626)³

On the 26th of March in the year 134⁴ the Department of Customs recorded that Idil Irizzhanov, an Armenian from the lands of the *Kizilbash* (Persia),⁵ brought three sleigh-loads of merchandise consisting of 80 pieces of narrow muslin, 33 pieces of wide muslin, 52 pieces of Indian calico cloth, 478 pieces of printed cotton cloth, 57 rolls of dyed yarn, and

¹Documents in part I deal with the reigns of Tsars Michael (1613-1645), Alexei (1645-1676), Fedor II (1676-1682), and the regency of Sophia (1682-1689).

²From the 15th to the 17th century, the Russian administration was divided into departments (*prikaz*). In the 18th century, Peter the Great replaced them with collegiums (*kollegiiu*), which, in the 19th century, were transformed into ministries (*ministerstvo*). The major *prikazy* were: *Posol'skii* (in charge of foreign affairs), *Inozemnyi* (in charge of foreigners traveling or residing in Russia); *Bolshoi Kazny* (in charge of trade and official delegations), *Tainykh Del* (in charge of the Tsar's correspondence and private affairs), *Razboinyi* (in charge of crime), *Yamskoi* (in charge of transportation and communications), *Tamozhennyi* (in charge of customs and tolls), *Proviantskii* (Quartermaster's Office), and *Kazanskii Dvorets* (in charge of regions and provinces, such as Siberia), which also supervised *Novaia Chet'* (finances).

³*TsGADA*, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1626), Coll. 100, file b, ff. 1-3. Although Armenian contacts with Russia had started in the tenth century, this seems to be the earliest surviving documentary evidence.

⁴Documents of Moscovite or pre-Petrine Russia, at times, use a date that is calculated from the creation of the world (which they assumed began 5508 years before the birth of Christ). Thus 5508+1626=7134; the thousands were occasionally left out, hence the year 134.

⁵The followers of the Safavi order wore a red turban with twelve gores. They became known as the *kizilbash* (T. *kızılbaş*, P. *qezelbāš*) ["red heads"], a designation which, at times, was used by the Ottomans and Russians in referring to the Persians or Persia.

3 loads of dye weighing 14 *puds*¹...The price of the merchandise was 503 rubles,² five *altyns*,³ and two *den'gi*...⁴He paid 34 rubles, 8 *altyns*, and 3 *den'gi* in custom fees.

Zhorap (Zohrab), an Armenian from Georgia, had 230 pieces of printed cotton cloth and 47 pieces of Indian calico cloth worth 162 rubles. He was charged 6 rubles, 23 *altyns*, and 4 *den'gi* in custom fees.

[The Armenian] Kazar Kaliustov (Ghazar, son of Galust) had sleighs with 417 pieces of printed cotton cloth, 44 pieces of muslin, 35 rolls of dyed yarn, and six loads of dye weighing 34.5 *puds*...The merchandise was assessed at 330 rubles, 29 *altyns*, and 5 *den'eg*, for which he paid 48 rubles, 11 *altyns*, and 4 *den'gi* in custom fees.

Khalil Makhmutov, a *Kizilbash*⁵ merchant who was going to Yaroslavl paid 11 rubles and 7 *den'eg*. Shumrut Aleev, a *Kizilbash* merchant...paid 6 rubles and 4 *altyns*.

The Armenian Ivanis Grigor'ev (Hovhannēs, son of Grigor) had four sleighs loaded with 1,518 pieces of printed cotton cloth, 23 metal stamps to print cloth, 2 pieces of red cotton cloth,⁶ 3 pieces of woolen fabric, 16 sashes,⁷ 40 pieces of printed cloth, 70 pieces of narrow and wide muslin, 18 pounds of blue cotton, and 260 *ansyrs*⁸ of Gilani⁹ silk. The merchandise was worth 1,280 rubles and 30 *altyns*...He paid 53 rubles and 4 *altyns* in custom fees.

On 29 March, the customs official, Evseiko Mikiforov, submitted the total duties collected above.

¹Russian measure of weight=16.39 kilos or approx. 36 pounds.

²During the 13th and 14th centuries the ruble was a silver piece weighing as much as 200 grams. After 1534 the ruble was standardized. It weighed 68 grams of silver. It was divided into 100 kopeks, or 200 *den'eg*, or 400 *polushek*.

³Each *altyn* was 3 kopeks or 6 *den'eg*.

⁴A *den'ga* was worth half a kopek, 200 *den'eg* were one ruble.

⁵In this context it refers to the person as being a Persian [Muslim].

⁶Text has *kumach*, a variation of *komash* or *qomash*.

⁷Text has *kushak*, a variation of *kurshaki*, a silken sash or belt (cummerbund) which formed an essential part of the Georgian costume.

⁸Measure of weight approximately one and one-third *puds*.

⁹The Gilan Province in Persia was known for its silk production. Following the forced migration of 1604, Shah 'Abbās had settled a number of Armenian families to engage in silk production there.

2

Petition Submitted by Sargis of Crimea, son of Hovhannēs
(20 April 1632)¹

To the Tsar of All the Russias, Sovereign and Great Prince Michael Fedorovich and to the Great Lord, the Holy Patriarch Filaret Nikitich² of Moscow and all the Russias, from your slave, Sarkis Ovanesov (Sargis, son of Hovhannēs), a newly-arrived Armenian from abroad and recently baptized as Kiril (Cyril).³ In the year 140 (1632), hearing of your benevolence towards us strangers, I, your slave, converted to the [Russian] Christian Orthodox faith. I left my livelihood and my kin in the Crimea, and accompanied by my wife, came to Russia with your envoy Prokofei Voekov, came to Russia to serve you. In Voluika, your governor provided me with daily food worth two *altyns*... We have been three months in Moscow and have not received any funds. We have used all our funds and have sold our belongings. My wife and I are dying from hunger and have no relatives here. My fellow Christians, who have left to seek your protection, are all receiving aid, while, I your slave shall soon perish...

3

Petition Submitted by Ivan Tavakalov for
Freedom of Trade in Russia
(14 March 1647)⁴

To the Tsar of All the Russias, Sovereign and Great Prince, Alexei Mikhailovich,⁵ from the submissive Armenian from the land of the *Kizilbash*, Ivashko (Ivan) Shirmov, son of Tavakalov. My Lord, previously, on 8 May, in the year 153 (1645), Your Father of Blessed Memory, Sovereign of All the Russias, Michael Fedorovich, following the baptism of my son

¹*TsGADA*, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1632), Coll. 100, file b, f. 2.

²Refers to Michael Romanov (1613-1645) and to his father, Filaret (Philaret), known as the "Great Lord" or *Velikii Gosudar* who was the real power behind the throne and, until his death in 1633, exercised equal power with his son, see biographical notes.

³On Armenians converting to Russian Orthodoxy, see commentary.

⁴*TsGADA*, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1647), file b, f. 1. The document reads "the year 185," instead of "the year 155."

⁵Tsar Alexei Romanov (1645-1676), see biographical notes.

Ivashka, granted me a charter which permitted me to travel back and forth between Moscow and the Terek [River]. The decree allowed me, my sons, and my brothers to travel from the land of the *Kizilbash* to Moscow and to trade all sorts of goods in every Russian town. His Highness decreed that I pay the same duty as the Russian merchants¹—half of one-third on every thousand rubles—but the tax-farmers and other officials in each city are demanding more. My three sons and I have voluntarily left Persia and have settled in Astrakhan. I request that You, the Sovereign Lord and Prince of All the Russias, Alexei Mikhailovich, decree that I, a foreigner who have baptized my son, have the right to trade in all the Russian cities [between the Terek and Moscow] paying the said duty.²

4

*Negotiations between the Department of
Foreign Affairs and the Persian Envoy*
(3 June 1658)³

On the third day of June, in the year 166 (1658), the Great Lord, Tsar and Great Prince Alexei Mikhailovich ordered the boyars to meet with the senior boyar, the viceroy of Kazan, Prince Alexei Nikitich Trubetskoi⁴ and the *Kizilbash* envoy, Dakul Solṭān Khan.

The envoy stated that his sovereign, Shah ‘Abbās,⁵ hoped that the Tsar was in good health and proposed brotherly friendship among the two states. He added that past quarrels should be forgotten and complaints by third parties ignored. Instead, merchants from both states should be permitted to trade freely and without any hindrance...⁶[It was agreed] that

¹Tavakalov requested a *zhalovannaia targovaia gramota*, which was granted to all Russian merchants in 1613 by Tsar Michael.

²The cities of Astrakhan, Kazan, Nizhni-Novgorod, and Moscow charged their own duties. Since Armenian merchants, unlike most Russian traders, sold their wares throughout the Volga region, Tavakalov requested a decree, which permitted him to trade in transit by paying a single duty.

³*TsGADA*, Russia's Relations with Persia (1658), file 13, ff. 1-2.

⁴The Trubetskoi boyar clan was among the triumvirs who ruled Moscow during the *Time of Trouble*.

⁵Shah ‘Abbās II (1642-1666).

⁶The Department Foreign Affairs forwarded approved petition to the Department of Regions and Provinces, *TsGADA*, file 13, f. 3.

all raw silk brought to Moscow was to be first sold at a fixed price to the treasury of His Highness, the Tsar. Whatever remained, could then be sold at a higher price to others. It was decided that a fixed price should be determined for raw silk. It was also agreed that in exchange, similar Russian products would be sold at a fixed price in Persia.¹

5

*Report on the Arrival of the Representative
of the Persian Armenians
(March to August 1660)*²

Last year, on 7 April 167 (1659), the representative of the Shah of Persia, the Armenian merchant, the *e'temād ol-dowle*³Zakharīi,⁴ arrived by boat in Astrakhan on his way to the court of the Great Sovereign, Tsar and Great Prince, Alexei Mikhailovich. He was accompanied by nine men and brought a number of gifts for the Great Sovereign...

On 27 March 168 (1660) Khodzha Zakharīi Saradov arrived at the court of His Majesty, Tsar and Great Prince Alexei Mikhailovich. He presented the Great Sovereign with 15 flasks of Shiraz wine; 3 flagons of

¹Russia had opened diplomatic relations with Persia in 1647, when Tsar Alexei's envoy, Prince Kozlovskii, arrived in Isfahan. In 1650 the envoy of the Shah, Moḥammad Qolī Beg, arrived in Moscow to complain about Don Cossack raids on Persian boats on the Caspian Sea. In 1653, the Russian envoy to Persia, Prince Ivan Lobanov-Rostovskii, complained that the Shah's vassal, the Khan of Shemakhi, had threatened to attack Astrakhan and had harassed Russian merchants. In addition, the Russians were unhappy with Muslim attacks on Christian Georgia. King T'eimuraz I (1606-1648) of Kakhet'i (and his son David) looked to Moscow for protection but were killed by the Persians. The Persian envoy had come to Moscow to address these and other issues relating to trade between the two states.

²*TsGADA*, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1666), file b, ff. 1, 6, 27-34, 45-46, 55. The representatives arrived on Russian soil on 28 March and stayed until 20 August.

³This was the title (also spelled *i'timād al-dawla*) of the chief minister of Persia.

⁴Khwāja (Khoja) Zak'ar of the Sarhadean family was one of the wealthiest merchants of New Julfa. For more details on the trade activities of Persian Armenians see I. Baghdiantz-McCabe, *The Shah's Silk for Europe's Silver* (Atlanta, 1999).

aromatic vodka; 4 flagons of rose-flavored vodka; a bottle of orange-flavored vodka; 12 *zlotniks* of eastern perfumes; Indian sugared ginger, and various exotic fruits. The value of these goods was not determined...¹

On 12 April he presented His Majesty with a throne (*tsarskoe mesto*) made of gold, uncut diamonds, various precious stones, rubies, sapphires, and pearls... On 3 June the throne was evaluated by the jewelers Paul Widman and Semen Gur'ev. The throne has golden armrests with eight uncut diamonds, worth 150 rubles each, for a total of 1,010 (1,200) rubles.

There are 64 smaller uncut diamonds worth 60 rubles each, for a total of 3,840 rubles.

There are 54 uncut diamonds, smaller still, worth 15 rubles each, for a total of 810 rubles.

There are 158 small rubies worth 1 ruble each, for a total of 158 rubles.

There are 130 small uncut diamonds worth 5 rubles each, for a total of 650 rubles.

There are 28 ruby chips worth 5 *altyns* each, for a total of 4 rubles, 6 *altyns*, and 4 *den'gi*.

The ruby on the front part of the throne is worth 50 rubles. There are also 30 uncut diamonds worth 50 rubles each, for a total of 1,500 rubles. There are 30 smaller uncut diamonds worth 15 rubles each, for a total of 450 rubles. Sixty-two smaller diamonds worth 2 rubles each, for a total of 124 rubles.

The other part has 24 small diamonds worth 1 ruble each, for a total of 24 rubles. There are also 24 rubies worth 8 *altyns* and 2 *den'gi* each, for a total of 6 rubles.

The third part contains 24 small diamonds worth 1 ruble each, for a total of 24 rubles. There are also 24 rubies worth 8 *altyns* and 2 *den'gi* each, for a total of 6 rubles.

The two posts on the top contained 94 diamonds worth 3 rubles each, for a total of 282 rubles. There were also 80 small diamonds worth one ruble each, for a total of 80 rubles. There were also 86 ruby chips, worth 8 *altyns* and 2 *den'gi* each, for a total of 21 rubles, 16 *altyns*, and 4 *den'gi*.

¹Among the gifts was a painting of the Last Supper, see document 6.

The seat was surrounded by 72 diamonds, worth 5 rubles each, for a total of 360 rubles. There were also 39 rubies worth 16 *altyns* and 4 *den'gi* each, for a total of 19 rubles, 16 *altyns*, and 4 *den'gi*.

The two front legs had 136 diamonds worth 5 rubles each, for a total of 680 rubles. There were also 98 rubies worth 16 *altyns* and 4 *den'gi* each, for a total of 49 rubles.

The front board contained 3 diamonds worth 15 rubles each, for a total of 45 rubles. There were also 75 diamonds worth 5 rubles each, for a total of 375 rubles.

On the connecting panels there were 66 rubies worth 16 *altyns* and 4 *den'gi* each, for a total of 33 rubles.

Between the two front posts two men holding a crown are embroidered in gold on black velvet. Under the crown there is writing embroidered in small pearls, worth some 15 rubles.

The golden frame weighs some 23 pounds and is worth 3,312 rubles. There is 7 pounds of silver on the throne worth 70 rubles.

There are 17,000 turquoises worth 2 *den'gi* each, for a total of 1,500 rubles.

The goldsmiths and silversmiths [of the financial department] estimate that the throne of gold and silver with a total of 897 large and small diamonds, 1,298 rubies, and 18,030 turquoises, is worth 15,858 rubles, 6 *altyns*, and 4 *den'gi*...¹

Other gifts included a golden ring with a diamond worth 150 rubles; a silver brazier weighing 7 pounds and 51 *zolotniks*² worth 52 rubles and 25 *altyns*; two golden rings with diamonds worth 100 rubles; a silver filigree box with a lock weighing 1 pound and 42 *zolotniks*, worth 21 rubles, 18 *altyns*, and 2.5 *den'gi*. The total for all the gifts of gold, silver, and precious stones totaled 22,943 rubles, 8 *altyns*, and 3 *den'gi*.³

The Tsar ordered that the Shah's envoy Zakharii be given a salary and be provided with room and board worth 30 rubles per month... On 17 August the Tsar issued an order for Zakharii to return to Astrakhan via Nizhni-Novgorod and Kazan...

¹A later, more careful, assessment put the total worth of the throne at 22,589 rubles and 20 *altyns*, *TsGADA*, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1666), file b, f. 44. The throne is presently on display in the Kremlin's Armory Museum.

²Russian weight equal to 1/96th of a Russian pound.

³Another source lists the value as 24,443 rubles, *SAAN*, II, 287.

6

Zak'ar Sarhadean's Letter to Almaz Ivanovich¹
(10 March 1666)²

Prior to this, I, your humble servant, presented Your Majesty with a painting of the Last Supper.³ You inquired about the painter. In the workshop where this painting was prepared, there is a master who surpasses all others. His name is T'anri Veran, which in your language translates as Bogdan.⁴ We have convinced him to go to Moscow and have given him money for the expenses of his journey, the amount of which should not prove too much for the Great Tsar.⁵ Once he arrives the Sovereign can decide how much to pay him. He [Bogdan] has a great talent and is a superb craftsman. Please relate this to His majesty, the Tsar. Let Bogdan stay in Moscow and serve there. If you are satisfied with his work, choose two students to work under him for some five or six months, so that they can learn his technique.⁶ When he returns to us we will be willing to send another master of your choice... Written on Saturday, 10 March in the Armenian year of 1115 (1666).⁷

¹Almaz Ivanovich was an official at the court in Moscow.

²*TsGADA*, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1666), file, 1, f. 97-98, see facsimile of the original on page 36.

³This was a copy of the famous painting by Leonardo da Vinci.

⁴The Armenian version is Astuatsatur. He stayed in Moscow for some 38 years and achieved fame as Bogdan Saltanov (also known as Ivan Ivliuev). He died in 1705 in Moscow. For more details see M. Ghazaryan, *Hay kerparvestē XVII-XVIII darerum* (Erevan, 1974). A document, dated 1670, describes his mastery in detail, see K. Grigor'ian, "Zhivopisets Bogdan Saltanov v Moskovskoi Oruzheinoi Palate," in *Teghegagir*, 4 (1948), pp. 50-54.

⁵A previous note states that a sum of one to two hundred (type of money not specified) and a travel order from Russia would be necessary, *TsGADA*, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1666), file 1, f. 92.

⁶Bogdan's work must have impressed the Russians, for on 15 June 1667, the Tsar appointed him to decorate the Armory Chamber (now museum) in the Kremlin. The artist moved his equipment there on 18 June and began to prepare his mixture of oil paint, which the master icon painter Simon Ushakov (1626-1686) pronounced superior to the one prepared by the masters in Moscow, see A. I. Uspenskii, *Tsarskie ikonopistsy i zhivopistsy XVII veka*, III (Moscow, 1916), 385-386.

⁷The Armenian calendar began in 552, thus 1115+551=1666.

7

Petition by Forty Persian Armenians Residing in Russia
(1666)¹

To the Sovereign Tsar and Great Prince Alexei Mikhailovich, we bow our heads before You. Our friends, and we, Armenians from the land of the Shah, Stenka Moiseev, Grishka Matveev, Safarko Nazarov, Bogdashko Saltanov, and Babka Turesov make up a total of forty men.²

As merchants we travel to Persia, Turkey, India, and the German cities.³ We believe in our orthodox⁴ Armenian Christian faith. There are many Armenians in Persia and Turkey and we have constructed numerous Christian churches there. When our colleagues and we travel to India and Germany, we have churches there as well. Thus we can pray there and, if one of us is dying he can receive his last rites. As foreigners in your Great Russian State we are not permitted to enter your churches to pray to God. If one of us falls ill and is on his deathbed, we cannot call a [Russian] priest, for no priest will come. We thus die without receiving the last rites and our souls are lost. This is the fate of pagans and unbelievers. We are foreigners, but neither pagans nor unbelievers. We believe in the true Christian faith. We have the same churches and monasteries as you do. Our Church is acknowledged by the pope and by the patriarchs as part of the Universal Church.

Your Majesty, at present Arapet Martinov, an Armenian leather master, is on his deathbed. No priest is willing to come to his side. Your Majesty, when one of your Russian merchants, through God's will, falls sick, our priests visit them and if they die they are buried with proper [Christian] rites. A number of our merchants from Kazan and Astrakhan, fearing for their souls, have gone back to the land of the *Kizilbash*.

Charitable Sovereign, Tsar and Great Prince Alexei Mikhailovich, please give us foreigners the right to go to church and to pray to God. So that if one of us dies or suffers grief he will be permitted to receive the

¹*TsGADA*, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1666), file 4, f. 1-3.

²When in doubt, the Armenian names will be transliterated as they appear in the original document.

³The text uses the term *Nemetskie gorody*, which may have at one time meant the German Hanseatic cities, but, which by the 17th century, referred to other northern European cities as well.

⁴The text has the Russian word *pravoslavnuu*.

body and blood of Christ... We shall pray that God protect You and Your throne... Please permit us to pray in your churches in Astrakhan and Kazan, so that our friend can receive the last rites...

8

Petition Submitted by Armenian Merchants from Isfahan
(1666)¹

To the Sovereign Tsar and Great Prince Alexei Mikhailovich, We, Armenian merchants from the capital city of Isfahan in the *Kizilbash* land of Shah 'Abbās prostrate ourselves before You. We, Stepan Moiseev Ramadamskii,² Grigorii Matveev Lusikov,³ together with our fellow Armenian merchants have come to Moscow to beg Your Highness to grant us the right to import raw silk and other merchandise for sale in Russia or to transit the goods via Novgorod or Archangel (Arkhangelsk) to European cities... We shall transport Persian goods which are currently taken via Turkish lands through Russia. Your Highness and the Russian treasury shall benefit greatly from this trade... Our Shah is a friend of Russia and an enemy of Turkey...

¹*TsGADA*, Russian Relations with Armenia (1667), file 1, f. 1-2, 14.

²Step'an, son of Movsēs, was an important merchant and the nephew of Khoja Zak'ar.

³Grigor Lusikeants', son of Matt'eos, was a member of the Armenian Trading Company as well as the official envoy of the Shah. He was instructed to form an alliance between Persia, Russia, and Poland against the Ottoman Turks. He sought the aid of the Polish envoy to Russia and Persia, Bogdan Gurdei (the Georgian), see *TsGADA*, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1672-1673), file 3, f. 102-103. The Dutch traveler Jan Struys mentions that he had four live tigers and leopards as gifts for the Tsar. He also notes that he saw him in Shemakhi in January 1671, together with the Russian and Polish envoys that had come to seek an audience with the Shah. He adds that thousands of Armenians had come from the surrounding villages to witness the dipping of the cross in the river and the pouring of holy chrism into the waters on 6 January to celebrate the Armenian Feast of Nativity and the Baptism of Jesus, see J. J. Struys, *Tri puteshestviia* [*Les Voyages de Jean Struys en Moscovie, en Tatarie, en Perse*] (Moscow, 1935), pp. 37, 247-257.

9

Decree of Tsar Alexei(22 April 1667)¹

Any foreigners, be they Persians, Indians, Bukharans, Armenians, Kalmyks, Circassians, or citizens of Astrakhan, who come with their goods to Moscow or other Russian cities have to pay a *grivenok* per ruble of merchandise. If they trade in Astrakhan, they are to pay 10 *den'eg* per ruble in duty. Armenian and Greeks who bring pearls and precious stones can proceed without paying any dues. Their chests and bags have to be examined carefully for other merchandise...

10

The Trade Agreement between Russia and the Armenian Merchants(31 May, 1667)²

The Armenian subjects of our brother, Shah 'Abbās, the great ruler of Persia, the citizens of Isfahan, Stepan Ramadamskii and Grigorii Lusikov and their fellow merchants of the Persian Armenian company presented the following petition to the Great Sovereign and Tsar: "We transport annually some 4,000 bales³ of silk to Europe via Turkish territory and ports and import European goods. We suffer great losses due to banditry on land and piracy at sea. Since Persia and Russia have had friendly relations and because our great Shah, 'Abbās, professes brotherly love for the Great Tsar of All the Russias, Alexei Mikhailovich, we, the representatives of the Armenian Trading Company⁴ propose a trade agreement between our nations..."

Blessed by God Almighty and the Holy Trinity, Alexei Mikhailovich, Great Sovereign and Tsar, Great Prince of Great, Little, and White Russias; Autocrat of Moscow, Kiev, Vladimir, and Novgorod; Tsar of Ka-

¹SAAN, I, 3.

²TsGADA, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1667), file, 1, f. 14-22.

³The text has *iuk* (also *v'iuk*), which was a large load anywhere from 20 to 80 *batmans* or *mans* per load (depending on the beast of burden: ass, horse, or camel). The *man* varied from 40 to 84 lbs. depending on the region.

⁴The Armenian Trading Company was not like a European commercial enterprise. It was formed by the heads of the twenty neighborhoods of New Julfa, the *kalantār* and the *ūstābāšī*.

zan, Tsar of Astrakhan, Tsar of Siberia; Sovereign of Pskov; Great Prince of Smolensk, Tver, Iugur, Perm, Viatsk, Bulgar; Sovereign and Great Prince of the regions of Nizhni-Novgorod, Chernigov, Ryazan, Rostov [the Great], Yaroslavl, White Lake, Udor, Obdor, Kondin, and the entire Northern territory; Master of many states and lands in the east, west, and north, has graciously granted the petitions of Stepan Ramadamskii and Grigorii Lusikov, the subjects of the Shah of the Persian and Shirvan lands, 'Abbās. These Armenian subjects, living in Isfahan and other locations belonging to the realm of the Shah, possess considerable merchandise and wish to trade freely in Russia. The Sublime Monarch has asked that the Grand Boyar in charge of foreign affairs, Afonasii Lavrent'evich Ardin-Nashchokin, prepare and seal the following decree with the State insignia and hand it to the said merchants:

From the summer of the year 7175 of the creation (1667) the said merchants of the Armenian trading company are permitted to bring silk and other merchandise to Astrakhan. The said merchandise will be weighed and recorded and shall be taxed according to this agreement.

From goods in transit the company shall pay ten *den'eg* per *pud* of fine raw silk worth twenty rubles a *pud* and the same amount for low-quality raw silk worth sixteen rubles a *pud*. All other items will be taxed ten *den'eg* for each ruble worth of merchandise. Whatever is sold at Astrakhan shall be taxed at ten *den'eg* per ruble. The cost of transport to Moscow shall be one ruble per *pud* of merchandise. The merchants are permitted to carry up to ten *puds* of provisions duty free for the trip to Moscow. They are also permitted to carry twenty pounds of tobacco each for their personal use only and not for sale. The merchants, like all honest trading men, should declare all their merchandise and hide nothing. If the merchants are short of cash they can pay one-twentieth part of the merchandise instead.

Upon arriving in Moscow the merchants shall pay a duty of ten *den'eg* per ruble of merchandise they wish to take to Europe. They are permitted to carry one hundred *puds* of provisions each way. For goods brought back from Europe to Persia the company shall pay two *altyns* and two *den'gi* for each ruble worth of merchandise. The Armenian merchants may purchase, using silver or gold, Russian merchandise and take it duty-free to Europe or Persia. The cost of transport from Moscow to Astrakhan shall be paid by the company at the rate of one *altyn* per ruble of merchandise. The merchants are permitted to carry one hundred *puds*

of provisions duty free for the journey. They are also permitted to carry up to five *vedro*¹ of vodka per person duty-free. The custom officers in Astrakhan are instructed to facilitate the moving of the merchandise and deal swiftly and honestly with the merchants of the said company...²

11

Vasilii Daudov's³ Petition(8 August 1668)⁴

To the Great Prince Alexei Mikhailovich from his humble and prostrated slave from the Department of Foreign Affairs, the interpreter Vas'ka Aleksandrov, son of Daud. In the year 164 (1656), I, your serf, together with Prince Ivan Ivanovich Lobanov-Rostovskii, left Persia and came to your domain. I converted to the Orthodox Christian faith and am serving You as an interpreter in the Department of Foreign Affairs. My blood brothers in Persia, having learned of my conversion and of my services to Your Highness in Moscow, have expressed their desire to come to Moscow and need your permission. Please allow my brothers, Halep and Il'ia Babaev to travel from Astrakhan to Moscow without paying heavy

¹Liquid measure of 21 pints or 12 liters. Another copy of the agreement has six *vedro*. The weights and duties are not consistent in the various drafts of the agreement. Subsequent revisions of the agreement during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, however, confirm the duties stated above.

²A copy of the decree was sent to the chief of customs at Astrakhan, *TsGADA*, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1667), file 1, ff. 24-25. Copies in Armenian, German, and Persian were also made on 31 August and 3 September, *ibid.*, ff. 26-34. A month earlier, on 22 April, Tsar Alexei decreed that Persian, Indian, Bukharan, Armenian, Kalmyk, and Circassian merchants taking wares to Moscow had to pay a *grivenok* per ruble of merchandise in Astrakhan as transit duty. Those who sell their goods in Astrakhan had to pay 10 *den'eg* per ruble. In addition Persians, Armenians, and Greeks had to be searched for pearls and precious stones, *SAAN*, I, 3.

³Vasilii Daudov was an Armenian from Isfahan, who in 1653 came to Moscow with the Russian envoy to Persia. He stayed in Moscow and became an interpreter. He was later sent as an envoy to Isfahan. He served in the Russian court for fifty years and was named *stol'nik* (a Russian courtier below the rank of *boyar*), nobleman, and *voevoda* (military commander). He and his son, Babaev, were active in promoting Armeno-Russian and Russo-Persian contacts.

⁴*TsGADA*, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1668-1669), file 4, f. 1.

duties on their goods. For my brothers are coming with a number of Persian master weavers who prepare wool and silken rugs...¹

12

Grigorii Lusikov to Tsar Alexei(1671)²

To the Sovereign Tsar and Great Prince Alexei...³On 25 April I arrived in Astrakhan and waited there for Your Majesty's travel permit. After that Boyar Ivan Bogdanovich dispatched me, your humble servant, to Moscow. Great Tsar, your envoy,⁴ Andrei Priklonskii, crossed a different river and I did not meet with him to find out the purpose of his mission to Shah Soleimān.⁵If he has gone to discuss the matter⁶concerning the Georgian prince,⁷or the Cossacks,⁸or the robbing of the Astrakhan merchants, dispatch a speedy courier⁹to stop him from going to Astrakhan. For, I have been sent by the Shah to discuss these three matters. If he has gone to Persia on other business, then God be with him. I have written the same request to the Boyar Prince Yakov Nikitovich...It is six years since I have crossed the sea and have served Your Majesty in Persia. For the last two years I have been acting as your representative at the Persian court and if God gives me health, I shall continue to serve Your Highness. Shah Soleimān has decreed that the Armenian merchants be permitted to export raw silk and other merchandise to Russia in accordance with Your Majesty's decree (of 1667), regarding the transport, sale, and collection of duty. The annual production of raw silk in the realm of the

¹On 29 June 1669, the Tsar approved this petition under the New Trade Provisions, which reduced duties on certain items, in order to promote commerce in Russia, see *TsGADA*, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1668-1669), file 4, f. 4.

²*TsGADA*, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1672-1673), file 1, f. 24.

³The formal greeting is in Russian, but written in the Armenian script.

⁴The text has the Russian term *poslanik*.

⁵Shah Soleimān I (also known as Šafī II), 1666-1694.

⁶The text uses the Persian term *maṭlab*.

⁷The text has *Gurji tsarevich*.

⁸Refers to the revolt of Stenka Razin (1667-1671) and his raids in the Caspian region. Folio 37 claims that Razin hoodwinked the people of Astrakhan, who let him into the fort.

⁹The text has the Turkish term *çapar*.

Shah is 8,000 *v'iuk*.¹ Each *v'iuk* has six *puds*. All of that shall go to Russia. Great Lord, I have much information, some of it known, others secret, which will benefit Your Highness. I request that you halt the envoy in Astrakhan until I present my secret information to you so that you may respond to Shah Soleimān. I have labored much for this and fear that my work may come to naught...²

13

*Proclamation from the Department of Foreign Affairs Addressed
to the Moscow Merchants*
(15 July 1672)³

The Armenian merchants⁴ have obtained a decree granting them the privilege of importing raw silk and other Persian merchandise to Moscow, Archangel, Novgorod, Pskov and Smolensk and, via the sea, to Europe.⁵ The Russian merchants in Moscow and other cities should not interfere in the activities of the Armenian merchants... The said merchants from Persia, be they Armenians, Persians, Asians,⁶ or Indians who

¹The text has the term *khakh*.

²In an earlier document, written in 1671 from Derbent (Darband), Lusikov informed the Tsar that Shah Soleimān had decreed that Armenian merchants could take raw silk to Russia and from there to Frankistan (Europe). He added that the matter concerning the Georgian prince had been resolved. He then told the Tsar that Armenian merchants from New Julfa, who were in Shemakhi, had heard about the Kazakh attack on Astrakhan and had taken their silk to Rum (Ottoman Empire). He added that he had been waiting for 14 months for the Russian army to come and liberate Astrakhan from the Cossacks. *TsGADA*, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1672), file 1, f. 37 The Russians finally defeated Razin and enabled Lusikov to come to Astrakhan from where he dispatched the above letter.

³*TsGADA*, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1672), file 2, ff. 20-21.

⁴The Russian term is *gost'* (guest) which also translates as influential merchants who traded in the *gostinyi dvor* (large arcade). There were three categories of such merchants: a: those who could own land and hold government offices, b: those who were members of a company and sold their wares in an official arcade or bazaar, c: individual traders of lesser goods.

⁵The decree was issued on 7 February 1672. The full text of that decree is in *SAAN*, I, 152-157.

⁶Primarily merchants from Samarkand and Bukhara.

bring raw silk and other Persian merchandise for sale in Russia have to deal solely with Russian merchants in Moscow and Astrakhan. They are not permitted to trade with Europeans, Greeks, or other foreigners. They are also not permitted to trade the European merchandise they bring into Russia on route to Persia. Russian merchants are permitted to carry Russian or European goods to Persia solely via Astrakhan and exchange them only for raw silk and nothing else...¹

14

Shah Soleimān to Tsar Alexei(1672²)³

To the Great Sovereign of the North...You wrote about the friendship between our great nations and you have granted our subjects Stepan and Grigorii and their companions the right to trade in raw silk, camel wool, and various other merchandise in your realm...I have seen your decree and am well disposed toward our friendly relations...I have written a decree granting the Armenian merchants the right to conduct trade via Russia...

15

Armenians of Isfahan to Tsar Alexei(1672)⁴

To the Supreme Tsar, Ruler of rulers, Gracious Monarch of Christians...We were told by Stepan and Grigorii to cease our trade with the Turks and to take our raw silk, camel wool, and other goods to Russia.

¹On 7 August 1680 (1672) the head of the Moscow merchants, Vasilii Shorin, together with other Russian merchants (Vasilii Fedor Iurev, Mikhail Gur'ev, Ivan Antovinov, Ivan Khudiakov, Ostafei Filat'ev, Stepan Gorbov, Semen Potapov, Averkai Kirilov, Ivan Klimshin, Alexei Sukhanov, Iakov Kirilov, Kipreian Kleishin, Semen Verekov, Foma Gur'ev, and Fedot Kleishin) affixed their signatures/seals on this proclamation, *TsGADA*, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1672), file 2, f. 22.

²The letter was probably written in 1671 and translated from Persian on 2 December 1672.

³*TsGADA*, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1672), file 3, ff. 1-2.

⁴*Ibid.*, ff. 3-4. The letter was written in March 1671, but was translated from Persian in 1672.

Your decree permitted us to trade there and to take our merchandise to Europe... We, the Armenian merchants from Isfahan, and our *kalantar*¹ from [New] Julfa, are your servants and prostrate ourselves before you. We beg that you assure our safety and rid the land from the bandit Cossacks and others who hinder our trade. Once the roads are secure, the cities shall prosper and we shall bring merchandise to Russia from Persia and Europe. We entrust this petition to Grigorii, who bears messages from our Muslim ruler, Shah Soleimān. Signed: Astuatsatur Mireteants' (elected leader), Pstik Aqa Shah-Khaseants', Aqa Piri Shahkhatuneants', Markar Sharimaneants', Safar Tepchents', Zak'ar Gerakents, Vakhgum Dzhuairi, Grigor Giuzents', Hovhannēs Dzhearkalanets', Aqasar Kame-lents', Ghukas Djemalents', Grigor Amirasatents', Aqa Piri Mirza-bekeants', Voskan Zairunts', Minas Ponosents', Valiandis Tagarints', Hakobjan Ustabashi, Hakob Lusikents', Hovsēp' Nanets', Karapet Karas Mankats', Ugannes Askandarov (Hovhannēs Eskandareants').

16

Kat'oghikos Petros² to Tsar Alexei
(2 December 1672)³

To the Tsar crowned by Christ... from the slave of God, Peter, the Armenian kat'oghikos, with prayers of Gregory the Great⁴ of Greater Armenia. I am the Patriarch of the Holy See of Gandzasar, where the holy relics of St. John the Baptist, Gregory the Great, Joseph of Arimathea, and others are located and where we call upon the apostles of Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost to guard your throne, the city of Moscow, and your entire kingdom...

Your Majesty is aware that merchants are like sheep and need a safe place to multiply. Great Sovereign, you have given our Armenian people the right to trade in your lands. The Persian Shah has confirmed that right and the Armenian notables of Isfahan are overjoyed. They beg Your Highness to make the country safe from turmoil. We pray that your enemies will be vanquished and you, like King Solomon, spread your justice

¹The *kalantar* was the chief secular officer of the Armenians of New Julfa.

²Kat'oghikos Petros III (1653-1675) was the Patriarch of Aghuank' (see p. 52, note 3). He resided in the Gandzasar monastery in Karabagh.

³*TsGADA*, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1672), file 3, ff. 4-5.

⁴Gregory the Illuminator.

to embrace our people and safeguard them from harm. May the blessings of the saintly King Constantine and all the other heavenly saints be upon your family.

17

Decree of Shah Soleimān(1672)¹

The decree [1667] of the Great Russian Sovereign [given to the Armenian merchants] was presented to us by the honorable boyar, Afonasii Lavrent'evich Ardin-Nashchokin, who was accompanied by the scribes Gerasim Semenov, son of Dokhturov, Luk'ian Timofeev, son of Golosov, Efim Rodionov, son of Iur'ev, and by the Armenians who had traveled to Russia, Stepan Ramadamskii and Grigorii Lusikov.

We decree that our merchants instead of selling their silk in Turkey shall take all of it to Russia and Europe via land and sea to Astrakhan and Europe. They shall then return by land and sea to Astrakhan. They shall be accorded safe travel and assistance. If they are attacked by bandits and lose their merchandise, or if the merchandise is damaged in transport, the loss will be deducted from the duty owed.²

18

Travel Request from Armenian Catholics(3 January, 1673)³

On 3 January in the year 181 (1673) the envoy of the Shah, Grigorii Lusikov presented two Armenian Dominicans, Azaria and Anthony,⁴ who with three servants, who were sent with a secret mission to the Pope in

¹*TsGADA*, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1672), file 3, ff. 7-8. The decree was written in the Muslim lunar (*hejri*) year 1080 (1669/70).

²A similar letter regarding the safety of merchants from marauding Cossacks was written (in Georgian) by the Polish envoy, Bogdan Gurdei, on the same date (2 December 1672) and sent to the Department of Foreign Affairs, *ibid.*, ff. 102-103.

³*TsGADA*, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1673), file 3, ff. 1-3.

⁴Azaria, son of Hovhannēs, and Anthony, son of Nazar were Armenian Catholics who were educated in Rome and sent by the Pope to Persia in 1669 to form an alliance against the Ottoman Turks.

Rome. They joined Grigorii's group for safety and arrived in Moscow. They wish to travel to Europe.¹

They live in Persia in the city of Inchivan (Nakhichevan). Four years ago they went to Rome, via Turkey, to study Latin. While there, the French king and the princes of Venice and Florence wrote to the Pope to help them form an alliance with Persia against the Turks. They sought couriers who would be entrusted with the three letters to the Shah of Persia to carry them on their own person through hostile territory. The Pope gave four additional letters of his own and dispatched the two Armenians to Persia via Turkey. The Shah received the letters and announced that he was ready to act. He added that ten days after the Christian states commenced a war he would attack the Ottomans. The Shah's message was entrusted to Azaria and Anthony and it was decided that they should return to Europe via Russia, which was safer. They traveled with Grigorii and after six months reached Astrakhan. When Grigorii received permission to proceed to Moscow they accompanied him. They carry six letters from the Shah of Persia to the Pope, the Holy Roman Emperor, the Spanish King, the French King, the Prince of Venice, and the Prince of Florence. The contents are not known for they are in cases.

The letter to the Pope is in a case of gold-embroidered velvet.

The letter to the Holy Roman Emperor is in a case of silver-embroidered satin.

The letter to the King of Spain is in a case of gold-embroidered satin.

The letter to the French King is in a case of silver-embroidered satin, but smaller than the previous one.

The letter to the Prince of Venice is in a case of gold-embroidered cherry-colored satin, but smaller than the previous one.

The letter to the Prince of Florence is in a silver-embroidered greenish cloth, but larger than the previous one.

The Shah's seal in red wax is on every case, which is tied with a golden lace. There are no letters to the Tsar. They had a letter for the khan of Shemakhi, which they gave to the boyar, Prince Yakov Nikitich Dolgorukii in Astrakhan. Their travel permits from Astrakhan were given to the Armenian Grigorii Lusikov

¹According to the great Armenian historian and geographer, Alishan, the route taken by such travelers was from Isfahan to Derbent-Astrakhan-Moscow-Poland-Vienna-Venice-Florence-Rome-Turin-Paris, See Gh. Alishan, *Sisakan* (Venice, 1893) p. 96.

19

*Kat'oghikos Hakob of Julfa¹ to Tsar Alexei
(1673)²*

Invincible Emperor

I prostrate myself before Your August Majesty and send Your Highness the innumerable prayers of the Armenian Church for Your health and the peace of Your Kingdom. We [the Armenians] hope that you shall continue to be victorious and overcome, crush, and destroy the enemies of Christ. Relying on the constant charity displayed by the August Emperor to foreigners and fellow countrymen, I come to you on my knees. You, the Almighty Emperor of Russian Moscovy have been the constant defender of the [Christian] faith and have protected the fallen against the despotism of their enemies. It suits Your Highness, as the successor of Christian heroes, to lend your personal and royal support to us the unfortunate.

The Persian officials have burdened our Church with outrageous³ taxes. They drag us, helpless and impoverished people, to jail for not being able to pay these taxes. They harass and torture us, and finally they force us to convert to Islam,⁴ which is the main purpose of the Muslims. If these persecutions deprived us only from riches and peace of mind it would have been tolerable and I would have born them in silence. But when I witness how our people, who have been raised as Christians, leave daily from the bosom of the Church; the young lads are fooled, while the older men are forced to give up their salvation, I cannot abide it. I shed tears to God in front of his icon and I approach Your Highness, the Emperor, and God's deputy on earth, to alleviate our suffering and

¹Hakob of Julfa, kat'oghikos at Ējmiatsin (1655-1680). He sought to form an Armeno-Georgian alliance against the Muslims. He and other Armenian emancipatory pioneers met secretly in Ējmiatsin in 1677 and formed a delegation, headed by Hakob, to seek the aid of Christian Europe. They reached Constantinople in 1680, where Hakob died and the mission was abandoned. One member of that mission, Israel Ori (see section II), went on to Europe, see, G. Bournoutian, "Eastern Armenia from the Seventeenth Century to the Russian Annexation," in R. G. Hovannisian, ed. *The Armenian People*, II (New York, 1997), 86.

²*TsGADA*, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1724), file 2, ff. 5-6. The letter is in Latin. It was probably composed by Step'an Lehats'i.

³Text has *exotica*.

⁴Text has *ritum* (from *ritus* or rite).

save us from misfortune. I hope that when Your Majesty sends envoys to the Persians, they can use their influence and say a few words on our behalf. The Russian State is important in the eyes of the Persians and they may stop their harassment once they witness your concern. Thus the Armenian Church and I, by the grace of God, its servant in Christ, bow our heads in supplication and in public prayer.

Your Imperial Highness' most faithful, most humble, and most insignificant slave.

20

Trade Agreement between Russia and the Armenian Trading Company (7 February 1673)¹

Following the petition of the Armenian Company His Imperial Majesty has decreed the following be added to the trade agreement of the year 175 (1667). Merchandise, brought to Astrakhan, Moscow, and other cities of His Highness, which is damaged or lost on land or water routes should be recorded so that the duty agreed in the previous accord will not be charged on those items. The route from Astrakhan to Moscow will be cleared of trouble. The Great Sovereign will instruct the *boyars* and *voevodas* to safeguard the Volga route from robbers. No raw silk will be sold to foreigners in Russia. If, due to quarrels between Russia and Europe, some merchandise destined for Europe remains unsold, His Majesty's treasury will purchase it at a fixed price...

All silk taken to Moscow has to be guarded against bandits. If the merchandise is lost no duty should be collected. Silk can be taken to those countries that are at peace with Russia. If the silk is not sold in Russia at the market price, a duty of 35 rubles per *pud* for good quality and 30 rubles per *pud* for lesser quality is to be collected. Silk should not be sold to foreigners, even if they travel to Persia to purchase it.²

The Armenian Grigorii Lusikov took the following oath by placing his hand on the Holy Bible on 7 February 1673 in the Department of Foreign Affairs: The Armenian merchants belonging to the Armenian Trading Company shall transport all their silk via Russia. They shall not sell it to

¹*TsGADA*, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1672), file 3, ff. 11-12.

²This paragraph is in *SAAN*, I, 5.

foreigners in Persia or Turkey, nor shall they transport it to Europe through Turkey...¹

21

Merchandise Sold to the Treasury by Hakob, Son of Grigor
(1674)²

Four bales of low-quality raw silk weighing 41 *puds*...one bale of high-quality raw silk weighing 9 *puds*...Duty paid in Astrakhan was 10 *den'eg* per ruble of merchandise...Items not traded in Moscow and sold to the treasury were valued at 35 rubles per *pud* of quality raw silk and 30 rubles per *pud* for raw silk of lesser quality...Altogether 1629 rubles, 8 *altyns*, and 2 *den'gi*. The duty on the said sale is 81 rubles and 15 *altyns*. The Armenian is therefore to receive 1,537 rubles 28 *altyns* and 2 *den'gi*.

22

Jewels and other Luxury Items Sold to Tsar Alexei
By Armenian Merchants
(19 May, 1675)³

His Majesty, the Tsar, has authorized that his functionaries Rodion Matveevich Streshnev, Grigorii Poroshin, and Perfilii Olovenikov exchange 500 rubles worth of sable furs from the treasury for emeralds, rubies, other precious stones and items of quality from the Armenian Iakov Pogosov (Hakob Poghosean) and his trading companions. The following stones were received:

From Iakov Nazarov (Hakob Nazarean):

One large emerald worth 35 rubles (the Armenian claims it is worth 40 rubles). A red ruby worth 20 rubles (the Armenian claims it is worth 30). Five emeralds worth 30 rubles (The Armenian claims they are worth 35 rubles). Nine hundred [small] emeralds each worth 2 *altyns* and 2 *den'gi*, for a total of 63 rubles (the Armenian asserts they are worth 90 rubles). One emerald worth one ruble (same value was given by the Armenian). A stone from the South, worth 1 ruble, 16 *altyns*, and 4 *den'gi* (same

¹*TsGADA*, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1667), file 1, ff. 104-105.

²*Ibid.*, (1674), file 1, ff. 40, 45, 47.

³*TsGADA*, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1675), file 2, ff. 137-139.

value was claimed by the Armenian). Seventy-eight [small] emeralds worth one ruble, 16 *altyns*, and 4 *den'gi* each for a total of 116 rubles (same value was given by the Armenian). Six colorful stones worth one ruble, 16 *altyns*, and 4 *den'gi* each for a total of 9 rubles (the Armenian claims they are worth 15 rubles). Eight white porcelain cups each worth 10 *den'eg* for a total of 13 *altyns* and 2 *den'gi* (the Armenian claims they are worth 16 *altyns*).

Total 276 rubles and 30 *altyns*

From Iakov Avetikov (Hakob Awet'ikean):

Eighty red pieces of cloth each worth 13 *altyns* and 2 *den'gi* for a total of 32 rubles (same price as listed by the Armenian). Two woven fabrics from Kashan¹ worth four rubles (the Armenian claims they are worth five rubles). Six woven fabrics from Kashan worth 2 rubles each for a total of 12 rubles (the Armenian claims they are worth 18 rubles). Twelve silken sashes² from Kashan, each worth one ruble for a total of 12 rubles (the Armenian claims they are worth 24 rubles). Three small sashes worth 20 *altyns* each, for a total of one ruble, 26 *altyns*, and 4 *den'gi* (the Armenian claims they are worth 3 rubles). Seven hundred and seventy [small] emeralds, 700 of them worth 6 *altyns* each, the other seventy 6 *altyns* and 4 *den'gi* each, for a total of 140 rubles (the Armenian claims they are worth 192 rubles, 16 *altyns*, and 2 *den'gi*).

Total 201 rubles, 26 *altyns*, and 4 *den'gi*

From Semen Abdulov (Simēon Abdulean)

One silken sash from Kashan worth one ruble (he claims it is worth 2 rubles). Seven woven fabrics from Kashan worth 2 rubles each for a total of 14 rubles (he claims they are worth 17 rubles, 16 *altyns*, and 4 *den'gi*). Eight silk cloth pieces from Kashan each worth 13 *altyns* and 2 *den'gi* for a total of 3 rubles, 6 *altyns*, and 4 *den'gi*.

Total 18 rubles, 6 *altyns*, and 4 *den'gi*

From Iakov Pogosov (Hakob Poghosean)

¹Text has *daragi*, probably a variation on *dara'i*.

²Text has *kushaki*, a variation on *kurshaki*.

Atlas¹ cloth worth 3 rubles, 3 *altyns*, and 2 *den'gi* (he claims a wroth of 4 rubles).

The entire merchandise totaled 500 rubles (they claimed a value of 631 rubles, 5 *altyns*, and 5 *den'gi*).²

23

The Dutch Envoy³ to Tsar Fedor⁴
(22 February 1676)⁵

Great Tsar...Dutch merchants seek to form a company with you, your government, or with the Armenian merchants for the purpose of trading in silk. We seek an agreement with the following stipulations: 1.The Armenians shall not import more silk than shall be agreed upon. 2.No other items, save silk, shall be exported from Persia to Russia and Europe. 3. Your treasury shall not collect any duties above what was agreed with the Armenians. Such an agreement will result in the following: 4.All merchants, rich and poor, will be allowed to trade freely and make profits. 5.The cost of silk in Europe has fallen due to the devastating war.

¹Text has *kutni*, a derivation of *gotni*.

²On 21 March 1675 Russian merchants from Vologda asked permission to buy raw silk from the Armenian merchants led by Hakob Poghosean. Some 100 merchants signed the petition, *ibid.*, file 3, ff. 1-3. In the same year Armenian and Indian merchants were granted permission to have their own *torgovy dvors* (arcades) in Moscow, *ibid.*, file 8, ff. 1-3. A year later, Poghosean and his partners asked for permission to sell silk in Moscow, Archangel and transport their goods to Europe. A list of their imports is as follows: Poghosean 10 bales of low-quality silk; Saray Lazarev 20 bales, Ivan Makar'ev 6 bales, Kristafor Matveev 16 bales, Zakar Kir'iakov 16 bales plus 2 bales of high-quality silk, David Bagumov 10 bales of low quality and 2 bales of high-quality silk, Hakob Ovdo-kimov 6 bales, Harut Ruzhanovich 10 bales, Nikoghos Davidov 10 bales, Grigor Ivanov 10 bales, *ibid.* (1676), f. 3, f. 2. file 4, ff. 1-3; file 11, ff. 1-6; file 15, ff. 1-4; file 16, ff. 2-4 have lists of the various merchandise traded in Russia and Europe, which consisted primarily of precious stones, silk, and woven materials. For items purchased in Europe or Russia and brought to Persia, see document 25.

³Kondrat von Klenk.

⁴Tsar Fedor II (1676-1682), see biographical notes.

⁵*TsGADA*, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1675), file 3, ff. 491-492, 522.

The Armenians are not selling much silk there at the present and the Russian treasury is losing money...Armenians are also violating their trade agreement with Russia by continuing to use Turkish routes.

24

Hakob Poghosean's Petition

(12 February 1676)¹

I have been permitted to set up shop at the old trading arcade. That location does not have any trade traffic and no one comes to my store to see what kind of merchandise I have. Many customers frequent shops located in the center. Indians operate these shops and they attract all sorts of people who buy their wares. I have not sold anything, but have paid large sums in duties. Generous and Great Tsar, permit me to relocate my store to a better location so that I can sell my goods...²

25

Archbishop of Nakhichevan to Tsar Fedor

(26 February 1676)³

An Armenian by the name of Ioann (Hovhannēs) from the town of Nurashkin (Norashen) has submitted the following petition. His brother Bagi was a merchant in the Crimea. He traveled from the Crimea, together with the Crimean envoy, Mustafa Ağa, to Moscow. He died there and his goods were left with another Crimean envoy, Sefer Ağa, who is currently in Moscow. Sefer Ağa wrote to the family of the deceased and

¹*TsGADA*, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1675), file 1, f. 1.

²His request was granted and signed by E. I. Ukraintsev (1641-1708), who was one of the main secretaries of the foreign affairs department and later envoy to the Ottoman court, where he negotiated the peace treaty of 1700, *ibid.*, f. 2. On 14 March of that year the Russian merchant Ostaf Filat'ev requested permission to establish trade ties with the Armenian merchants in Astrakhan, *ibid.*, file 4, ff. 1-3.

³*TsGADA*, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1676), ff. 6-7. The original letter was written on 13 April 1674, but it took some time before it reached Moscow, was translated, and action was taken. Folio 9 contains the decree of the Tsar to the boyar, Artemon Sergeevich Matveev, to find Mustafa Ağa, to inquire about and recover the goods, be they in Moscow or Vologda, and to return them to Hovhannēs, who had arrived in Moscow with the necessary papers.

Hovhannēs possesses the letter...He begs Your Majesty to permit him to travel to Moscow to recover his late brother's goods...¹

26

Items Imported to Persia by Hakob Poghosean and Partners(17 April, 1676)²

From the Tsar and Great Prince Fedor Alekseevich...to the *voevodas* of Kolomensk, Pereslavl, Murom, Nizhni-Novgorod, and Kazan. The Armenian, Egup (Hakob) Bogusov (Poghosean) and his Armenian partners...have purchased the following goods in Moscow and are traveling to Astrakhan. Twenty sable jackets, three sable coats, three sable hats, three furs of ferrets, three fur collars, forty collars of marten fur, eighty Russian red leather skins wrapped in two crimson rags, one hundred and six *arshins*³ of red cloth and 127 *arshins* of rose-colored cloth, six *arshins* of serge (durable woolen fabric), a piece of European linen, thirty fish-bones (whale bone, ivory from seals etc.), thirty-nine knives, a dozen eye-glasses, six mirrors, one Chinese sword, one telescope, one silver cup, three sabers, one small chest with metal bindings, one hamper for provisions, a red casket, twelve ivory combs, fifteen thousand pins, four locks, ten *grivenok*⁴ of goose down, ten thousand needles, twenty-two combs, twelve batches of copper thimbles, twenty-four boxes of metallic buttons, seven daggers, five batches of copper hooks, and one mirror. Altogether 47 *puds* of merchandise.⁵

¹A similar petition from the Armenian Abanis (Awet'is) Kazarov exists on folio 10. He begs the Tsar not only to permit him to travel to Vologda, but to provide him with a Russian interpreter, since he does not speak a word of Russia.

²*TsGADA*, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1676), file 5, ff. 96-97.

³Each *arshin* equals 28 inches.

⁴One *grivenok* was worth ten silver kopeks. It is not clear if the term is used as a weight measure or as currency here.

⁵Other items listed, which were carried by Hakob's partners were: fifteen thousand pins, five pounds of silver filigree, 255 *arshins* of coarse cloth, one *pud* of dye, one amber box, two woolen garments, thirty-seven small chains, two small pistols, one carbine, mirrors, one white fur (probably ermine or Siberian fox). The total weight of their goods (including Poghosean's merchandise) was 81 *puds* and 15 pounds for which they paid a duty of 16 *altyns* and 4 *den'gi* per *pud*, *ibid.*, ff. 98-99. Raw silk, however, was the main import to Archangel from

27

Declaration by Russian Merchants(June 1679)¹

In June of 187 (1679) Russian merchants of Moscow submitted the following complaint: Armenian merchants in Moscow were permitted to import raw silk for the purpose of selling it in Europe. They obtained this right by the agreements of 175 (1667) and 181 (1673) agreed upon by Stepan Ramadamskii, Grigorii Lusikov and their partners. They were not permitted to sell their silk or goods from Europe in Russia. In the year 184 (1676) the Armenian Saran Lazarev and his partners were permitted to bring raw silk to Archangel and to transport it from there by sea to Europe. They were also allowed to bring various goods from Europe, which they had purchased by selling their silk. Their activities have created a major disruption in our abilities to trade. They bring European goods, sell them in Russia, and disrupt our commerce of the same goods. According to the agreement the treasury and our merchants were to purchase whatever silk was not sold in or transported to Europe. The Armenians leave the worst quality of raw silk in Moscow. They sell it to us or give it to the state. They reserve the best quality for sale in Europe. They obtain better prices there and return with various goods which they then sell in Moscow...

where it was taken to northern Europe (especially Holland). The Armenians paid 10 *den'eg* per ruble of silk in duty fees in Astrakhan. Whatever was not sold was valued at 20 rubles per *pud* and a duty of 10 *den'eg* per ruble was collected. The duty for any silk sold in Moscow was 10 *den'eg* per ruble of silk. That which was not sold was valued at 30 rubles per *pud* and a duty of 10 *den'eg* per ruble was collected. The duty for any silk sold in Archangel was 10 *den'eg* per ruble. Whatever was not sold was valued at 40 rubles per *pud* and a duty of 10 *den'eg* per ruble was collected prior to its departure from Russia to Europe, *ibid.*, file 7, f. 5. Various other documents mention the predominance of silk as the main trade item, see file 15, ff. 1-4 and file 16, ff. 2-4. Another document, dated 4 January 1677, mentions the duty paid by another Armenian merchant, Sergei Sergeev (Sargis Sargisean) for various goods transported from Moscow to Astrakhan, *ibid.*, file 17, ff. 14-15.

¹*TsGADA*, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1679), file 1, f. 54

28

Merchandise Imported from Holland by Armenians(20 September 1681)¹

The merchandise belonging to Hairapet Matveev and Sergei Sergeev was transported by water from Archangel to Vologda and from there by land to Moscow, via wagons or sleighs (in winter). The merchandise consisted of six cases of various items from Europe weighing 95 *puds* and 12 pounds and was sealed by the boyar and *voevoda*, Prince Nikita Semenovich Urusov on 20 September in the year 7190 (1681)...²

29

Petition to Tsars Ivan³ and Peter⁴(18 December 1684)⁵

We strangers, Armenian merchants Iliushka Babaev (Babaeon) and Tur-suko Bugusov (Toros Boghosean), have come from Persia with our merchandise to Moscow. We have been refused a place⁶ for our goods. Your Highnesses please permit us to rent a warehouse in the old trading arcade so that we can sell our goods, in the same manner as other Armenian merchants...⁷

¹*TsGADA*, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1681), file 4, f. 5.

²In 1682 the same merchants traveled from Moscow to Archangel with a large load of raw silk. They sent the silk to Europe and returned to Moscow, *ibid.*, (1682), file 2, ff. 9-13. Another document dated 28 March 1683 lists the items transported by Armenian merchants from Moscow to Astrakhan, *ibid.*, (1683), file 2, ff. 1-6. A document dated 29 April 1684 lists the merchandise brought by Hakob Grigorean from Holland for sale in Moscow and Astrakhan, *ibid.*, (1684), file 3, ff. 1-7. A month later he took some of that merchandise to Persia, *ibid.*, file 5, ff. 1-4.

³Tsar Ivan V (1682-1696). Ivan and Peter ruled as co-Tsars. Real power was in the hands of their sister Sophia, who ruled as regent until 1689.

⁴Tsar Peter I or Peter the Great. His reign officially began in 1689. Some historians feel that it was only after 1696 that Peter reigned independently.

⁵*TsGADA*, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1684), file 10, f. 1.

⁶Text has the term *anbar*.

⁷Armenian merchants involved in financial disputes petitioned the Russian State, for example see the letter of Sergei, son of Sergei in *TsGADA*, Russia's

30

Custom Duties Paid by Armenian Merchants
(1685)¹

List of goods brought by Armenian merchants from Persia:

Ivan Nazarov had 42 *puds* and 3 *grivenok* of raw silk; Arapet had 4 *puds* and 25 *grivenok* of raw silk; Vasilii Nazarov had 27 and three-quarters *puds* of raw silk; Bogdasar II'in had 46 and one quarter *puds* of raw silk; Vartan Yagupov has 20 *puds* of raw silk; Stepan Semenov had 38 *puds* of raw silk; Sargis Ariutiunov has 9 and three-quarters *puds* of raw silk; Grigor Bogdanov had 8 and a quarter pounds of colorful stones, 1,300 pieces of carnelian, and 20 knife handles. The merchandise was valued at 3,826 rubles, 3 *altyns*, and 2 *den'gi*. A duty of 191 rubles and 10 *altyns* was paid. The merchandise weighed 195 *puds* and 38 *grivenok*. They paid 195 rubles, 31 *altyns*, and 4 *den'gi* in transportation costs from Astrakhan to Moscow. The total duty paid to Russia was 387 rubles, 8 *altyns*, and 3 *den'gi*. They said merchants carried 19 *puds* and 1 *grivenok* of provisions with them.²

31

The Streltsy³ to Tsars Ivan and Peter
(1687)⁴

To the great Sovereigns, Tsars, and Princes Ivan Alekseevich and Peter Alekseevich, and the Great Tsarevna and Princess Sophia Alekseevna,

relations with Armenia (1684), file 6, ff. 1-8. The Armenian merchants were especially busy in 1684, see *ibid.*, file 8, ff. 1-2; file 9, ff. 2-3; file 10, ff. 1-2.

¹*TsGADA*, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1685), file 4, ff. 4-5.

²Two other documents attest to the trade activity of the Armenian merchants in that year. The first, dated 3 July gives permission to David Bagramov, Piri Davidov, and Moses Askanin to transport their goods from Moscow to Astrakhan. The second, dated 8 August lists the goods brought by Matthew Grigor'ev from Astrakhan to Moscow, *ibid.*, file 3, ff. 27-29 and file 5, ff. 16-25.

³The *streltsy* composed part of the standing army in Moscovite Russia. They were organized in regiments, lived in special settlements in the capital and engaged in trade, as well as acting as praetorian guards. They rebelled against the state during the reign of Fedor II and supported Sophia against Peter. At the end of the 17th century Peter disbanded the *streltsy* and executed many of them.

⁴*TsGADA*, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1668-1669), file 4, f. 1.

from Mishka Leont'ev and his three *streltsy* comrades. In the year 195 (1687), we were ordered by the Department of Foreign Affairs to accompany Armenian merchants to Tver. No fodder was provided, however. We beg that Your Highnesses order that fodder be provided for our horses during our escort duties.

32

Export Permit(10 May 1687)¹

By the decree of the Great Sovereigns, Tsars Ivan, Peter...the head of the Main Moscow Customs, Vasilii Filat'ev, cleared the merchandise of the subjects of the Shah, the Armenians, Agadzhan Avedikov and Osip Afonas'ev, to be transported to Astrakhan. The goods consisted of: Eleven rolls of red material of coarse wool, one silver censer, three pounds of pepper, 20,000 needles, two dozen knives, five dozen locks, two dozen scissors, ten whetstones, three hampers containing vials,² and two liters of gold and silver. The items weighed nine *puds* net. The transportation cost paid was 16 *altyns* and 4 *den'gi* per *pud* for a total of 4.5 rubles.³

Seal of the Moscow Central Customs

¹*TsGADA*, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1668-1669), file 5, f. 5.

²The Russian term *sklianka* can also mean hourglass.

³ *TsGADA* folders for the years 1687 (files 3, ff. 3-7; file 6, ff. 4-5; file 7, f. 6, 10-12, 25-40; file 8, ff. 4-5); 1688 (file 2, ff. 11-23, 31-36; file 5, f. 2; file 6, ff. 5-6; file 7, ff. 20-21; file 9, ff. 3-4); 1689 (file 1, ff. 5-6; file 2, ff. 4-6); 1690 (file 1, ff. 3-6; file 2, ff. 3-6); 1691 (file 2, ff. 3-10; file 3, ff. 2-14; file 6, ff. 28-30); 1696 (file 4, ff. 1-3, 6-7, 11-14, 16-17, 30-52; file 5, ff. 13-26; file 7, ff. 1-5); 1697 (file 3, ff. 1-12; file 4, ff. 1-14) contain lists of items brought imported from Europe and Russia into Persia and items exported from Persia. In addition to items already mentioned in the text, the imports consisted of linen, worsted wool and yarn, furs, Chinese fabrics, Russian and European mirrors of different sizes, plumes, earrings, nutmeg and other spices, nails, china, porcelain, amber, lace, paper, weapons, drinking glasses, candlesticks, spools, bells, sugar, lanterns, European dyed fabrics, taffeta, silver, and gold coins. In addition to the main export, which was silk, the Armenians traded fine goats wool (*kork*), carpets, saltpeter, slippers, various kerchiefs, fine leather goods, woven fabrics from Kerman, Kashan, Tabriz, and Isfahan, including the famed *zarbāft* (brocades embroidered with gold or silver). Sh. L. Khach'ikyan, in *Nor Jughayi Hay*

33

Duty Collected from Armenian Merchants
(1688)¹

Two Armenian merchants, Peter and Bogdan Amirev have transported raw silk to Russia for sale in-Europe. The Department of Foreign Affairs has ordered that the transport duties and duties collected in Moscow and Novgorod be paid in kind and not in cash. The said merchants paid 19 *puds*, 29 pounds, and 24 *zolotniks* of silk for the 15 bales of silk weighing 163 *puds* and 72 *zolotniks*...

vacharakanut' iwnē ev nra arevratntesakan kaperē rusastani het XVII-XVIII darerum (Erevan, 1988), presents a detailed study of this trade.

¹*TsGADA*, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1688), file 7, ff. 20-21.

[illegible]

Ի քո ծանոց անդամի որդի զաբարույ խնդրուի զայն բանս:

II (1689-1725)¹

34 *Travel Permit* (16 May 1689)²

Ivan Iur'ev, the chief of the central Moscow custom house has issued a travel permit to the Armenian merchant Sergei Ivanov to journey from Moscow to Astrakhan with his merchandise. The goods consist of 33 German pitchers, 42 German mirrors, 20 German knives, 16 pounds of German amber, 17,000 needles, 2 Russian mirrors, numerous furs, 30 silver rings, and many eyeglasses. The total weight of the merchandise was 13 *puds* and 5 pounds, from which a duty of 16 *altyns* and 4 *den'gi* was collected.

35 *Complaint Submitted by New Julfa Merchants* (1690)³

To the Great Tsars Ivan and Peter...⁴from the subjects of the Shah, of the Armenian Trading Company of (New) Julfa, Stepan Safarov son of Topchents and his seventeen partners, who prostrate themselves before you.

Your Father of Blessed Memory, Tsar Alexei Mikhailovich...decreed that we Armenians be permitted to freely trade our raw silk and other merchandise in Russia. Stepan, son of Topchents, together with his partners arrived in Astrakhan with raw silk and other goods. The customs officials kept them eight weeks there. The Armenians, who were short of cash, desired to pay the duty and transport costs in merchandise, as stipulated by the trade agreement. The officials refused. They took a small amount of merchandise and demanded cash. The Armenians were

¹The documents in part II deal with the reign of Peter I (the Great), 1689-1725, see biographical notes.

²*TsGADA*, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1689), file 2, f. 4.

³*TsGADA*, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1690), file 2, ff. 26-27.

⁴Sophia was no longer regent and although Peter was the real ruler, he permitted his sick brother to have the title of tsar until Ivan's death in 1696.

forced to borrow money with interest. They suffered losses when they were forced to sell their merchandise cheaply to buy the necessary provisions for the journey as well as their living expenses during the eight-week delay. The head of Astrakhan customs even taxed them on their personal clothing. In addition they were given a small boat which leaked and damaged some of the raw silk. The *voevoda* of Tsaritsyn¹ did not provide another boat to take them to Saratov. They were forced to send their interpreter to the *voevoda* of Saratov, who supplied a new boat. The *voevodas* on route from Saratov to Moscow, demanded bribes and delayed their journey with various excuses causing great losses...²

36

Imports to Russia by an Armenian Merchant(31 October 1691)³

Bagdasar Il'in, an Armenian merchant residing in Persia, took ten bales of raw silk to Europe via Archangel... Upon return he had the following goods in 10 bales: three bales of cloth of various sizes and colors, including crimson; 188 small gilded wall-mirrors, one large mirror in a golden frame, 108 books embossed in gold-leaf, six brass candlesticks, knives, coats, lace, and silver and gold coins...⁴

37

Memorandum on the Trade Agreements of 1667 and 1673(1695)⁵

According to the trade agreement of the time of Tsar Alexei given to Stepan Ramadamskii and Grigorii Lusikov in the years 175 (1667) and 181 (1673) Armenian merchants from Persia have the sole right to bring raw silk and other merchandise to Moscow. They shall pay 10 *den'eg* on every ruble worth of raw silk that was valued from 16 to 20 rubles per

¹The later Stalingrad and Volgograd.

²On 6 May 1690 Tsars Ivan and Peter instructed the officials of Astrakhan, Tsaritsyn, Saratov, and other cities on the Volga to abide by the trade agreement and not to harass the Armenian merchants; *TsGADA*, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1690), file 2, ff. 36-37.

³*TsGADA*, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1691), file 2, f. 8.

⁴Such trade continued through the 1690s, see *ibid.* (1696), file 4, ff. 1-48.

⁵*TsGADA*, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1695), file 7, ff. 45-46.

pud, depending on the quality. Transportation costs from Astrakhan to Moscow shall be one ruble per *pud*. Whatever they trade in Moscow they shall pay 10 *den'eg* per ruble of merchandise sold. Whatever is not sold and is taken to Novgorod, Smolensk, and Archangel shall be taxed 10 *den'eg* per ruble of merchandise. If the Armenians lack cash they can pay by giving the treasury one-twentieth of the merchandise. The cost of transport to Europe shall be ten *altyns* per *pud*. The duty for exporting raw silk to Europe shall be 10 *den'eg* for each ruble of silk worth between 36 and 40 rubles a bale. Items brought from Europe shall be taxed half a ruble per *pud* if the said merchandise is sold in Russia. If the merchandise is transported to Persia the duty shall be 2 *altyns* and 2 *deng'i* per ruble of goods. For every 100 *puds* of merchandise, the Armenians are permitted 5 *puds* of provisions duty-free. Russian goods purchased for silver or gold coins, whether Russian or foreign money, shall be duty-free.¹

38

Decree of Peter the Great

(21 February 1697)²

The Great Ruler, Tsar and Grand Prince Peter Alekseevich...has decreed that subjects of the Shah, the Armenian merchants who come to Astrakhan are to pay the transport costs for their merchandise to Moscow. Upon arrival to Moscow they are to immediately report to the Department of the Interior (*Kazanskii Prikaz*) where their goods shall be weighed and assessed for duty. The said assessment will be then forwarded to the Department of Foreign Affairs (*Posol'skii Prikaz*)...

39

Decree of Peter the Great

(14 May 1697)³

To Prince Volkonskii, the *voevoda* of Terek: We decree that the following merchants coming from Astrakhan be permitted to enter Russia: In-

¹The Persian envoy in Moscow, Hüseini Khan Beg, was informed that the Armenian merchants had the right to trade in Russia, providing that they did not take raw silk to the Ottoman empire, *TsGADA* (1695), file 7, ff. 48-50.

²*TsGADA*, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1697), file 5, f. 1.

³*SAAN*, I, 6.

dians, Bukharans, Gilanis, Armenians, and citizens of Astrakhan. Merchants and other representatives of the Shah of Persia are not permitted to enter.

40

Armenian Meliks to Peter the Great(29 April 1699)¹

We, the princes and leaders of Greater Armenia, prostrate ourselves before Your Majesty's throne from faraway and write you this letter so that You shall be aware of our misfortune, humiliation, and suffering at the hands of the unbelievers. Thanks the Lord, who gave Your Majesty's troops the courage to defeat Your Majesty's enemies. We pray that God grant them more victories.

We hope that Your Majesty shall grace us with Your Majesty's favor and grant us our wish to end our enslavement through Your Highness' intervention.

In the summer of 1678² we had a secret meeting where we acknowledged the power of Your Majesty and that of the other Kings and Christian Princes and your ability to save us from our misery. We elected three men from our people to go and to prostrate themselves before you and declare our wishes. They even reached Constantinople. In the meantime Persian troops arrived in our lands and began a war against the Georgians³ and we had to send speedy horsemen to recall our leaders home, leaving our task unfinished [the death of the kat'oghikos was the main reason].

¹*TsGADA*, Coll. 100 (1701-1703), file 3, ff. 238-239, also in *Ezov*, docs. 5-8.

²The secret meeting took place in Ējmiatsin under the leadership of Kat'oghikos Hakob of Julfa. According to some historians the meeting took place earlier, for Zak'aria Agulets'i, *Dnevnik* (Erevan, 1939), p. 118 notes that the kat'oghikos left Ējmiatsin on 1 July 1677 and never returned. Recent scholarship sets the date of the gathering in early summer of 1677. According to Ori, the meeting took place in Erevan and not at Ējmiatsin [although he probably meant the region and not the city of Erevan], *Ezov*, doc. 44. For more details on the meeting see P. T. Arutiunian, *Osvoboditel'noe dvizhenie armianskogo naroda v pervoi chetverti XVIII veka* (Moscow, 1954) and commentary.

³The action came as a result of the rebellion of Giorgi XI, the King of K'art'li (1676-1688, and 1703-1709), and Archil, son of Wakhtang V, who ruled of and on in Imeret'i (1661-1663, 1678-1679, 1690-1691, 1695-1696, 1698).

Among those chosen for the mission was Israyēl,¹ from the Proshean princely family,² who was to bow to Your Majesty. Not willing to go, he asked if his son [Israyēl Ori] could replace him.³ We accepted.⁴ When the delegation returned from Constantinople, Israel did not accompany them. Instead he went on to Europe,⁵ where he lived for nineteen years. We were sure that he was dead and we did not trust anyone else to send to Your Highness.

Blessed be the Lord, the same Israel has arrived from the land of the Emperor bearing an inscription from the Elector of the Palatinate,⁶ which states that Ori has been in his service for ten years, is a trusted retainer and has learned the art of war. He is recommended as a man of many talents.

We concur that Paron Ori is indeed a man to be trusted and is from among our oldest royal families. He has been appointed as our representative to Your Majesty's court. Let it be known that Ori's father and family has suffered a great deal for our sake, who are miserable Christians living under the yoke of the infidel. Ori has worked hard for nineteen years on our behalf. We shall accept whatever agreement he comes to with Your Highness.⁷

We are also sending Vardapet Minas⁸ from the Surb Hakob Monastery with Israel Ori. They are both aware of our requests and we shall accept

¹Documents written in Latin and French have *Ory*; those written in Italian and Russian have *Orij*; and those written in German have *Orij*. Some of the Armenian documents have *Israēl Ori*, others *Israyēl Ori*. For the sake of uniformity with modern Western publications, Israel Ori will be used throughout.

²A noble family in Siwnik' since the 13th century.

³Other sources maintain that he accompanied his son.

⁴The Armenian text has the Persian work *qabul* ("to accept").

⁵Text has Frankastan ("Land of the Franks").

⁶Johann Wilhelm. He is sometimes referred to as the Kurfürst (Elector) of Bavaria. Johann Wilhelm's letter to Giorgi XI about Ori is in *Ezov*, doc. 1. Giorgi's first reign was over, but the news had not reached the Palatinate.

⁷The signed testament of the meliks regarding Ori's trustworthiness is in *Ezov*, docs. 3-4.

⁸Minas Tigraneants' was born in ca. 1658. He became Ori's confidant and traveled with him until 1707. After Ori left for Persia, Minas remained in Russia and handled Ori's correspondence with the Russian government. After Ori's death, Minas continued to seek Russian aid. In 1716, Kat'oghikos Esayi made him the prelate of all the Armenians in Russia. He made Astrakhan his headquarters and sent Petros di Sarkis Gilanents' to Persia to gather information. Mi-

whatever they agree on our behalf. Your Highness, we put all our hopes in You. Please do not abandon us Christians and respond to our pleas. Jesus Christ shall give strength to Your army to liberate us...

We remain your most humble servants and slaves and submit our signatures and seals¹ voluntarily on 29 April 1699 in the town of Enkghakut' (Angeghakot'). Signed and sealed by Filipos, son of Haikaz; Safraz, son of Melkon; T'at'ēwos, son of Baghdasar; Sarukhan, son of Asatur; Shahnazar, son of Narin Beg; Aghajan, son of Yavri; Sukias, son of Shahin; Melkon, son of Bahum; Hohannēs, son of Naw.²

41

Johann Wilhelm to Peter the Great(13 October 1700)³

Leaders of Armenia have voluntarily sent Israel Ori, an Armenian of the princely family of Proshean⁴ to us. He has traveled for nineteen years in Europe with petitions from his people asking various princes and rulers to assist Armenia remove its Persian yoke. We have sent him to our liege and our relatives and are pleased to assist him in such a noble cause. We are dispatching Israel Ori to Your Highness with our letter so that he may inform you of the secret correspondence of the Armenian princes. We wish to ascertain if his plan is plausible and if Your Majesty will provide him with soldiers or permit troops of other nations to cross your land to fulfill the wishes of the Armenians.⁵ Ioannes Wilhelmus Comes et Princeps Elector Palatinus Rheni.⁶ Neoburgi, 13. 8-bris 1700.

nas joined the Russian troops during their invasion of the Caspian provinces (1722). He died in Moscow in 1740.

¹The text has *morh* from the Persian *mohr*.

²The Latin translation of the Armenian text is in *TsGADA*, Coll. 100, file 3, pp. 11-14. The Russian text is in *Ezov*, doc. 8. On 19 April, a similar letter was written to the Pope and to Johann Wilhelm, *Ezov*, docs. 2, 5 and in M. J. Saint-Martin, *Mémoires historiques et géographiques sur l'Arménie*, II (Paris, 1819), 479-485. Johann Wilhelm's response to the meliks is in *Ezov*, docs. 14-16.

³*TsGADA*, Coll. 100 (1701-1703), file 3, ff. 9-10, also in *Ezov*, doc. 17.

⁴Text has *Broschensium*.

⁵Between 22 September and 1 October 1699 Ori wrote reports to Johann Wilhelm regarding the passage of troops through Russia, *Ezov*, docs. 9-11.

⁶Russian translation of the document appears in *Ezov*, doc. 18.

42

Report of Andrei Afanas'ev¹
(2 February 1701)²

Today, 2 February 1701, there came to Sevsk³ Armenians from the city of Lvov in Poland. They were Grigor Petrov, Pavel Gavrilov, Bolder Semenov, Nikolai Khristoforov, Petr Gavrilov, Ivan Mikulaev, Andrei Semenov, Stepan Mikulaev, Semen Lazarev and from the land of Venice, Ivan Vlasov... They stated that they left Lvov in December 1700, although they cannot recall which day. They have traveled through Brad, Dumno, Rovna, Korets, Zviagen, and Kiev. They have been in Nezhin for five weeks and wish to proceed to Moscow to trade...⁴

43

Emperor Leopold⁵ to Peter the Great
(9 February 1701)⁶

Israel Ori, an Armenian from the Proshean princely family, having established his credentials in European courts and having received a lofty status, came to us. He demonstrated his obedience and courtesy and we, therefore, wish him well. He is now returning to his homeland and desires to have an audience with you. He hopes that a letter from us will facilitate this meeting. We request that you meet the said Ori and embrace him in your kindness. We also request that you provide him with safe passage through your kingdom. We thank you... Written in Vienna...⁷

¹He was the commander at the Russo-Polish border post.

²*TsGADA*, Coll. 100 (1701), file 1, ff. 3-4.

³Sevsk is on the Sev River of the Dnieper River basin. It was part of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and in 1585 was incorporated into the Moscow State.

⁴The report was sent to Golovin at the Department of Foreign Affairs and on 14 February the Armenians were permitted to proceed to Moscow, *ibid.*, file 1, ff. 1-2. On 19 April the Tsar ordered that Armenian merchants could, after paying the necessary duties, travel from Astrakhan to Moscow and on to Europe. Boats were to be made available for the transport back to Astrakhan, *ibid.*, file 2, ff. 1-2.

⁵Leopold I of the House of Hapsburg (1658-1705) was the Holy Roman Emperor. He ruled from Vienna and was the overlord of Johann Wilhelm.

⁶*TsGADA*, Coll. 100 (1701-1703), file 3, f. 22, also in *Ezov*, docs. 23-24.

⁷A similar letter was sent to the Armenian meliks, *Ezov*, docs. 20-21.

44

Special Polish Travel Permit Granted to Ori(23 April 1701)¹

Augustus Secundus² Dei gratia Rex Poloniae, Magnus Dux Lithvaniae, Russiae, Prussiae, Masoviae, Samogitiae, Volhyniae, Podoliae, Podlachiae, Livoniae etc., nec non Hereditarius Saxoniae, Iuliae, Cliviae, Montium, Ungariae etc., Vetsphaliae Dux, Sacri Romani Imperii Archimarschalcus et Elector, Landgravius Thuringiae, Marchio Misniae, nec non Superioris et Inferioris Lusatiae, Burgravius Magdeburensis, Comes Princeps Hennoburgensis, Comes Marcae Ravensbergae et Barty, Dominus in Ravensztein... Israel Ori, the representative of the Elector of Bavaria is traveling to Moscow for an important mission. All officials are to facilitate his journey in every possible way to and from Russia.³

45

Vladimir Sheremetev⁴ to Peter the Great(30 June 1701)⁵

To the Great Sovereign, Tsar, and Grand Prince Peter Alekseevich from your prostrated slave Volod'ka Sheremetev. On 30 June 1701 two men of the Roman religion and a Polish priest⁶ arrived in Smolensk from Lithuania. One of these foreigners is called Israel Ori and the other Orukhovich. They are traveling to Moscow to seek an audience with Your Majesty. They have a letter written in German and Latin from His Highness, the Roman Emperor.⁷ There is no one here that can read or translate the said letter. I have sent them and their two servants to Mos-

¹Ezov, doc. 25.

²Augustus II, Elector of Saxony, elected King of Poland (1697-1733) after the death of Jan Sobieski. His death began the War of the Polish Succession (1733-1735).

³The various titles of Augustus explain the many conflicting claims in East-Central Europe.

⁴V. P. Sheremetev was the governor of Smolensk.

⁵TsGADA, Coll. 100 (1701-1703), file 3, f. 1, also in Ezov, doc. 27.

⁶Although Ori had probably converted (*Krusinski*, I, 178) Minas had not. He may have pretended to be a Roman cleric to facilitate his travel through Europe.

⁷Text has Cesar.

cow accompanied by the bailiff Rodion Evstaf'ev to Fedor Golovin, head of the Department of Foreign Affairs.¹

46

Israel Ori to Peter the Great

(11-14 July 1701)²

Czaesarea (sic) Majestas

We have been received and treated very well by Your Majesty's ministers and we thank You for your hospitality. We are in good health. We have come to prostrate ourselves before You to seek help for our down-trodden people who are under the yoke of the unbelievers. I am sure that Your Majesty is aware that Armenia, in olden days, had a king and Christian princes. Because of discord the Armenians lost their kingdom and fell under the rule of the infidel. It is more than 250 years that these Christian people are under the tyranny of the unfaithful. Like the sons of Adam, who awaited the coming of the Messiah to save them from eternal death, the Armenians have been living and continue to exist in the hope of liberation. Their prophets have foretold that at this time they shall experience fierce intolerance and shall be forced into apostasy. Then, from the great house of Moscovy, a prince shall appear, wise and mighty as the second Alexander the Great, who shall take over the Armenian kingdom and save the Christians. The Muslims have begun to demand high taxes forcing our people to convert. The Muslims have been at peace for more than 70 years³ and are not prepared for war... You shall increase the glory of your reign among the Christian kings of Europe, Asia, and

¹On Golovin, see biographical notes. The five men arrived in Moscow on 7 July. They were listed as Israel Ori, Mina(s) of the Armenian faith, and three others, *TsGADA*, Coll. 100 (1701-1703), file 3, f. 21. A document dated 7 July ordered the Moscow Town Council to provide funds for the room and board of the visitors and fodder for their horses. The party (now 6 men, after hiring an interpreter) was to be given 16 *altyns* a day (Ori and Minas 5 *altyns*, the clerk and interpreter 10 *den'gi*, the cook and servant 8 *den'gi*). In addition Ori and Minas were to have 4 cups of wine, 3 cups of mead, and 2 cups of beer a day; the others 2 cups of wine and 2 cups of beer. They were also given 3 stacks of firewood and two bales of hay for the horses, *ibid.*, f. 211, also in *Ezov*, doc. 29.

²*TsGADA*, Coll. 100 (1701-1703), file 3, ff. 117-118. The letter is in Latin. The Russian translation is in *Ezov*, doc. 36.

³Refers to the peace of 1639 between the Persians and the Ottomans.

among the millions of Greeks, Georgians, Armenians, and others who shall pray to God for Your success, health, and long life¹

47

*Peter the Great to Prince Romodanovskii*²(14 July 1701)³

The Great Sovereign Tsar and Great Prince Peter orders that two soldiers be placed in the residence of the envoy of the Bavarian Elector, Israel Ori

¹On the same day Ori wrote to Golovin that he could not mention the details to the interpreter, but that Wilhelm and Leopold were ready to send troops to help the Armenians, *TsGADA*, Coll. 100 (1701-1703), file 3, ff. 24-28. Golovin responded the same day with the following questions: How many soldiers will the Elector send? How many princes of Leopold will be among them? What route shall this army take and who shall be responsible for their provisions in Russia? What guarantee does the Tsar have that the troops shall not harass the population or cause damage while passing through Russia? If, God willing, they manage to conquer certain places, who shall possess them and what people shall inhabit them? Upon conclusion of the campaigns, where shall the troops winter and who will be responsible for their provisions? *TsGADA*, Coll. 100 (1701-1703), file 3, f. 55. On 22 July Ori responded: The Emperor and the Elector shall provide troops only if they were needed to stop an incursion by the Ottomans. Troops will be sent only if the Russian Tsar, requested them. The troops shall pay for everything, even a single egg. They shall not molest the population or cause damage. All fortifications shall be under the control of Russian forces. Following the campaign, the troops shall winter in Armenia, where a single province can feed more than 100,000 soldiers without difficulty. A force of some 10,000 to 20,000 is required. Once Russian troops arrive, over 100,000 Armenians will join them in just ten days, *ibid.*, ff. 82-88. On 25 July Ori asked for 15,000 cavalry and 10,000 infantry, composed of Volga Cossacks and Circassians, who could move unobtrusively. He asked for 6 cannons and other artillery. The force would move to Shemakhi, which had no defensive walls and many Armenian merchants. The Khan of Shemakhi had only 150 retainers and was of Georgian origin. From there the army would cross into historic Armenia, take Ghap'an and Nakhichevan and move on to Tiflis. Many Armenians and Georgians would join, *ibid.*, ff. 70-75.

²Prince Fedor Iur'evich Romodanovskii (ca. 1640-1717), the head of the *Preobrazhenskii Prikaz*, was in charge of the security of the state. During Peter's absences from Moscow (1695-96, 1697-98), he was in control of the State.

³*TsGADA*, Coll. 100 (1701-1703), file 3, f. 53, also in *Ezov*, doc. 38.

to guard him and his entourage for as long as he stays in Moscow...¹

48

Israel Ori to Fedor Golovin

(1 August 1701)²

Your Excellency has asked that I give you a complete account of my travels in the land of the Franks³ and the purpose of my mission. With the utmost respect for Your Excellency, I content that such matters cannot be discussed in a letter. If Your Excellency will give me an appointment to present in person, I shall, via the interpreter Spafarii,⁴ explain the reason for my journey. I am prepared, if necessary, to travel to Armenia and gain the loyalty of the princes to Russia...⁵

49

Fedor Golovin to Israel Ori

(24 November 1701)⁶

By the order of the Great Sovereign, the interpreter of the Department of Foreign Affairs, Nicholas Spafarii and the state official, Lavrentii Protopopov, shall go to the residence of the Bavarian Elector's envoy, Israel Ori and present him with the following decree:

¹On 16 July Vasilii Vorob'ev and Ivan Puchkov were assigned as guards.

²*TsGADA*, Coll. 100 (1701-1703), file 3, f. 112. The original is in Latin.

³Text has Gallia.

⁴Nicholas Spafarii (some documents have Spofarii) was one of the interpreters of the *Posol'skii prikaz*.

⁵Two months later, on 28 October, Ori asked for another audience with the Tsar. In his petition he requested that a French interpreter be provided, for he had no Armenian interpreter and he could not speak Turkish. Since Ori spoke both Turkish and Persian it can be assumed that he was either more comfortable expressing complicated items in French or he felt that he would be accorded better treatment as a European, *TsGADA*, Coll. 100 (1701-1703), f. 126, also in *Ezov*, docs. 49-50. On 18 November Ori was informed that due to the war with Sweden his request for an audience had to be postponed, *ibid.*, ff. 145-146. On 22 November Ori again met with Golovin and Peter.

⁶*TsGADA*, Coll. 100 (1701-1703), file 3, ff. 139-142.

1. His Majesty has been informed that the envoy has had an audience with the first minister and that his credentials have been deemed genuine.
 2. The envoy in his previous talks with the grand boyar [Golovin] and specifically during his audience on 22 November has been informed that His Majesty, the Tsar, has accepted the Elector's proposal. Due to the war with Sweden, however, it would be difficult to engage his army on two fronts at this time.

3. At the appropriate time, the Elector should send to His Majesty, the Tsar a number of regiments with capable engineers and officers and all the necessary supplies. The Elector can decide on the best route. The said troops shall receive all the needed assistance upon entering Russia.

4. The envoy will send his greetings to the Elector and will no longer correspond with him. His interpreter¹ shall be dispatched to the Elector to inform him of His Majesty's decision. His Majesty has decreed that Ori, shall go to Persia to review the region. Minas and the rest of the retinue shall remain in Moscow until Ori's return. They shall be housed and fed appropriately. Ori will serve as His majesty's envoy, for the Armenians and Georgians will not trust anyone else, even if he was an angel from heaven. Ori shall show them His Majesty's decree, which gives assurances to the ten Armenian princes who have written to Him. Minas Vardapet will also write letters to the various monasteries to trust Ori and to believe his message. They must prepare to rid themselves from the rule of infidel. They must be ready, at the appropriate time, to receive the Russian troops and not to scatter in fear. His Majesty will also inform the King of Imeret'i, Archil, son of Wakhtang, to gather the Georgians.

His Majesty shall send a message to the khan of Shemakhi informing him of Ori's arrival. Ori, together with two or three men, under the guise of purchasing horses will be able to go to various regions [in Armenia] and assess the conditions without being suspected. The khan of Shemakhi, who is a Christian and the brother of the Khokhonich princes² who serve the Tsar in Moscow, will cooperate in this venture.³

¹A Frenchman, Peter Simonnaire, served as the chief clerk, paymaster, and interpreter of Ori's party.

²Khokhon and Elizbar Romanovich, belonged to the Davidashvili family.

³On 11 March 1702 Ori and Minas were told that the Elector and the Emperor would be informed of the Tsar's decision. For the time being, however, the war with Sweden prohibited Russia from carrying out any hostile actions in the south. Ori would be enrolled in the Tsar's army and would receive a salary, *TsGADA*, Coll. 100 (1701-1703), file 3, ff. 158-160.

50

Ējmiatsin Brotherhood to Minas Vardapet and Israel Ori

(7 November 1702)¹

From the vicar² of Ējmiatsin, Bishop Minas, Grigor, son of Kostan, and Aghajan, son of Yavri to our beloved Minas Vardapet and Paron Israel Ori. May God give you success in your efforts! Your letters have reached us and have made us very happy. We cannot answer all your letters, for we fear the beasts³ around us, of whom you are aware without our comment. Our fear does not permit us to write, but we shall send our response with a trusted envoy. We hope that you forgive us for not writing often. May God give you physical and spiritual strength so that you can continue the work of Constantine and Theodosius...⁴

51

Kat'oghikos Esayi⁵ to the Armenians of Russia

(7 December 1702)⁶

From the servant of Christ, Esayi, Kat'oghikos of All Aghuank', the successor of Gregory the Illuminator and the patriarch of the Holy See of Gandzasar,⁷ to the Armenians of Moscow and Astrakhan. May God bless all of you and keep you safe. May the Lord keep you safe from hunger, war, death, and other calamities, which befall on us due to our sins. Your messenger arrived here with your letter addressed to Kat'oghikos Simēon.⁸ He found the Holy See in darkness, for Simēon had died. He

¹*Ibid.*, f. 234.

²The text has *at'orakal*, which can also mean deputy or assistant.

³It is not clear if the text refers to the Muslims or to Kat'oghikos Nahapet who did not agree with Ori's actions (see doc. 52). The fact that the letter was not written by the kat'oghikos indicates that Nahapet did not wish to get involved. Although document 54 mentions a letter he addressed to Ori, it has not been included in the various archival collections.

⁴Refers to Constantine's Edict of Milan, which in 313 permitted Christians to worship freely and to Theodosius' decree of 380, which declared the Nicean credo as the sole Christian faith of the Roman Empire.

⁵Kat'oghikos at Gandzasar from 1702 to 1728, see biographical notes.

⁶*TsGADA*, Coll. 100 (1701-1703), file 3, f. 237.

⁷Realizing the reluctance of Nahapet, Esayi planned to extend his authority over the Armenians of Karabagh, Ganja, Shemakhi, Baku, as well as Russia.

⁸Kat'oghikos of Karabagh (1675-1701), see doc. 54 and biographical notes.

was frightened and left for Ējmiatsin. We had no chance to find out what was in your letter. As his successor, elected to the chair at Gandzasar, we are now responsible for your welfare and charge you to obey our directives... You realize the difficulty of our position in this region... It is your duty to inform us about your needs and we shall respond officially...

52

The Meliks of Karabagh to Israel Ori and Minas Vardapet(15 April 1703)¹

We received your letter of 10 May of last year, which was delivered by your interpreter, Miron.² We read the declarations of the three potentates, the Tsar, the Elector, and the Emperor and are very pleased that the Great Russian Tsar will come to our aid, when the time is right. We send this letter with our trusted elder, Avak. You are well aware of the terrible conditions and our suffering. You have written requesting funds to further your plans, as well as for us to get in touch with our friends in the region to prepare them for future action. We cannot trust each other and suspect everyone. We are being observed. A wrong word, even from a friend, would mean death. However, if you send us a trusted retainer we shall provide him with the necessary funds to carry out his mission. We trust you and have placed our names and seals on this letter. You have stated that the great minister³ of Russia has look favorably upon us. We hope that we will soon be able to serve the Tsar with deeds and not just words. After your departure, ugly rumors were spread about you. Thank God you are safe and have succeeded in your mission...⁴ We have learned that one of our citizens has been of great help to you...⁵

Remember that we offered Mr.⁶ Ori money when he was here, but he refused stating that it was dangerous to carry such a large sum with him.

Dear Minas Vardapet, you have written that Ori has abandoned his wife and children and has sold his belongings to concentrate on our free-

¹*TsGADA*, Coll. 100 (1701-1703), file 3, ff. 250-255.

²Miron Vasil'ev Mustofin was one of Ori's interpreters.

³Text has the Persian word *vazir* (minister).

⁴Ori returned to Armenia in 1699. A number of Armenian religious and secular leaders refused to sanction Ori's plan.

⁵An Armenian merchant, Taragol, from the village of Agarak in Goght'n, assisted Ori in Europe.

⁶Text has *paron*.

dom. Let he be sure that he shall be repaid by us and by God. It is obvious that God and not us has chosen you for this task. We rely on you more than on our current kat'oghikos.¹ He has turned against us and has presented the Shah² with annual gifts of 20,000 rubles. He is in league with the khans and is showering them with gifts. We do not trust him. Thousands of local Armenians have put their trust in you...

We have heard that the crafty Turk, Baba Suleiman, visited the Khan of the Crimea. He then asked the Shah to give him the city of Tabriz; otherwise he would join in a Turkish attack on Persia. He has told the Crimean khan and the Turks that as long as the Georgians and the Armenians remain in their villages they will not defeat the Persians. The Shah has accorded the Georgian princes great honor³ to gain their loyalty...

53

Meliks of Karabagh to Peter the Great

(7 May 1703)⁴

We, the lowest of slaves, wrote to You, Great Sovereign, that we were praying day and night for God to grant you great power so that you could remove our burden. Five years have passed⁵ and we have not heard anything. Our tears and fears continued. Thank God we have now received news that Minas Vardapet and Mr. Israel Ori have been fortunate to see Your visage and have received promises. They have informed us via Miron, the interpreter. We are overjoyed and have thanked God. We believe that with the help of God, You shall free us. We put all our hopes on You. We are grateful that You read our message which we had entrusted to Minas Vardapet and Mr. Israel Ori and that you have decided to help us... At the present we cannot give any financial or other help. There are those among us who we do not trust. They are in league with the unbelievers and can terribly harm us. We have also heard that Baba Suleiman is planning to take over Armenian and Georgian lands. God will not permit this for it would mean the total destruction of our people. That is why we cannot cause any suspicion to fall on us at this time. Upon arrival of your troops, however, we shall rise and give you full assistance.

¹Nahapet I of Edessa (1691-1705) did not cooperate with Ori.

²Shah Soltān Hōsein (1694-1722), see biographical notes.

³Refers to Giorgi XI and Wakhtang VI of K'art'li, see biographical notes.

⁴*TsGADA*, Coll. 100 (1701-1703), file 3, ff. 240-241.

⁵Refers to the letter given to Ori in 1699.

May that day arrive soon. Mr. Israel Ori is a capable man from a noble family. From his youth he has fought for our cause. He has served well in the armies of France and that of the Elector...

We, together with the Kurds, Zaza, Arabs, Greeks, Georgians, and others who live among us have been invaded by the enemy and are ready to join you when the time is right...

Our land was where Noah's Ark landed on Ararat and began the various nations of the world...For thousands years no king has been able to undertake such a noble deed. God has chosen You to redeem our land...

We are threatened by two states: The Turks wish to capture us and the Persians may totally destroy us. Numerous Armenians and Georgians have been reduced to poverty due to heavy Persian taxes. Those who convert are honored and those who do not shall perish. For more than two hundred years the Turks have conquered our land and have ruled over us. In all that time we have not sought assistance from any Tsar but you. We place our lives, that of our wives and children in your hands. We shall remain quiet, for our own protection, until the arrival of your troops. Like the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, a trinity that is one, our word constitutes the same oneness...Amen.

Written on 7 May¹, in the Armenian Year 1152²[1703], in Aghuank'.³

P'ilipos, son of Hēkaz, attest⁴with my seal⁵and signature. Amirbeg, son of Martiros, attest with my seal and signature. T'at'ēwos, son of Baghdasar, attest with my seal and signature. Aghajan, son of Yavri, attest with my seal and signature. Shahnazar, son of Narinbeg, attest with my seal and signature. Melkon, son of Baghdasar, attest with my seal and signature. Sok'ias, son of Shahin, attest with my seal and my signature. Hōhannēs, son of Naw, attest with my seal and my signature.⁶

¹Ezov (doc. 99) has 27 May, which is incorrect. The original Armenian text has 7 May.

²Text has 1182, which is incorrect.

³The land of the Aghwan or Caucasian Albania originally included most of the present-day Republic of Azerbaijan. By the seventeenth century, however, the Armenians of Karabagh-Zangezur (parts of historic Artsakh and Siwnik') referred to their region as Aghuank', which had its own princes (meliks), as well as a kat'oghikos, who resided at the see of Gandzasar.

⁴Text has *ghabul* from the Persian *qabūl* (accepted).

⁵Text has *morhn* from the Persian *mohr* (seal).

⁶On the same day the meliks wrote to Golovin promising a payment of 20,000 gold coins (equal to 2,400 *tomans*) upon the completion of their request, *TsGADA*, *op. cit.*, ff. 257-258, 263. They also wrote to Nicholas Spafarii prom-

54

Report on Miron's Mission(20 July 1703)¹

In May 1702 by the order of the Great Sovereign, Miron left Moscow for Persia, carrying letters from Israel Ori to the Armenian kat'oghikoses, Nahapet and Simēon.² He was ordered to deliver the letters to them personally and to bring back their response to Moscow. Miron, left Moscow for Astrakhan from where in the company of Russian and Armenian merchants he crossed the [Caspian] sea into Persia...After reaching Shemakhi he continued on to Ganja, where he was informed that Simēon resided near the small town of Chartaglu.³ Miron visited the kat'oghikos and gave him Israel Ori's letters. Simēon took the letters and told him to go to Erevan and seek an audience with the chief kat'oghikos, Nahapet. After that on his way back he [Simēon] would have the answer to Ori's message. Miron went to Erevan and presented Ori's letters to Kat'oghikos Nahapet. He stayed with the kat'oghikos at the St. Gregory monastery⁴ for two and a half months. The kat'oghikos gave him a letter addressed to Ori and gave him leave to depart. Miron returned to Chartaglu, but Simēon had died and Esayi was the kat'oghikos. A church elder by the name of Hovhannēs brought a letter from Esayi addressed to Ori. Miron was told that he could not meet with the new kat'oghikos. Miron took the letter and returned to Shemakhi where he spent the winter. In spring, upon the arrival of the caravan from Astrakhan he left Persia and returned to Moscow via Astrakhan. He delivered the letters from the Armenian leaders to Ori and Minas, but does not know the content of the letters.⁵ He has little information about local conditions in Armenia, for

ising him 4,000 gold coins (equal to 440 *tomans*), *ibid.* (1718), file 4, f. 12. It is not clear that these payments were bribes to encourage the Russian officials to view their requests favorably.

¹*TsGADA*, Coll. 100 (1701-1703), file 3, ff. 231-233.

²Refers to Simēon IV who is considered by some as an anti-patriarch who resided in The Three Youths Monastery. After his death, Esayi Hasan-Jalalean reigned in Gandzasar from 1702 to 1728. Another anti-patriarch Nersēs V remained in The Three Youths Monastery (1728-1763).

³Chartaglu, also known as Mahavuz, is on the right bank of the Terter River in the district of Jraberd in Karabagh.

⁴Miron visited the kat'oghikos at the Holy See of Ējmiatsin located 12 miles southwest of Erevan.

⁵See documents 42 and 43 for the text of those letters.

he was ill during his stay in Erevan [Ējmiatsin]. He states that there is no war between Persia and the Turks and that trade flows freely between Russia to Persia...

55

Israel Ori to Peter the Great

(22 November 1703)¹

Our merchants have repeatedly attested to the persecution of the Christian inhabitants [of Transcaucasia] by the Muslims. They are overtaxed and forced to convert. Our leaders have written to us via Miron the interpreter that they and the entire Christian population is praying to God to give strength to Your Majesty and your army to vanquish your enemies as soon as possible and to come to the rescue of the millions of souls who suffer under the yoke of the infidel.

As I reported to Your Majesty the [Holy] Roman Emperor gave me oral assurances that he was ready to aid us in any way your Highness deems necessary. The Elector of the Palatinate also wrote to Your Majesty that he would send as many troops as You would permit. Although Your August Majesty does not need any reinforcements at the present, it may be useful in the future. May God see to it that Your Majesty enters Asia and into our country, where there are no fortifications except in Erevan. You shall then conquer all of Armenia and Georgia.

Anatolia is populated by Greeks and Armenians and has few defenses. It leads directly to Constantinople...I ask that I, who am doing nothing here, be permitted to go and assess the situation personally. I request that you invest me with the rank of colonel of musketeers so that I may recruit suitable military men. I am prepared to sacrifice everything including my life in the service of Your Majesty.²

¹*TsGADA*, Coll. 100 (1701-1703), file 3, ff. 278-280.

²A similar request was sent on 6 December. In January 1704 Peter gave him a safe conduct to travel to Europe, *Ezov*, doc. 125. For the next two years Ori solicited Peter, the Emperor and the Elector to aid him in his mission, see documents dated 26 August 1704 and spring 1705 in *Ezov*, docs. 120, 130. At the end of 1706 Peter agreed to send Ori and his retinue to Persia. Ori and Minas were given more than 200 rubles for their travel and food expenses, *TsGADA*, Coll. 100 (1706), file 2, ff. 1-2, 56-57, 60-61.

56

Department of Foreign Affairs to Department of Customs
(13 July 1706)¹

Bogdan Konstantinov, An Armenian merchant from the Armenian Company [from New Julfa] is petitioning to proceed to Archangel with his goods. We would like to ascertain if the said person has paid the necessary duty according to the agreement. Does he have any debts or unpaid claims?

Ivan Gubin

The Armenian Bogdan Konstantinov, mentioned above, has paid all the dues and has no claims against him.

Grigorii Makeev, treasury

57

Peter Khovanskii² to Peter the Great
(10 September 1706)³

On 30 August 1706, Armenian merchants from the land of the Shah, from the Armenian Company in Julfa, led by Ariutiun Torosov, have arrived here. They sought permission to transport their goods to Moscow according to their agreement regarding the sale of raw silk in Russia. Although according to the report filed by the bailiff, Osip Tverdyshev, they were fifteen in number, I counted are twenty-three of them. Their merchandise weighed 1,042 *puds* and 23 pounds. They left for Saratov from where they shall continue to Moscow. I assigned Michael Voronov to accompany them to the Department of Foreign Affairs and place them in the hands of the boyar, Fedor Alekseevich Golovin...

Torosov and his companion Amidzhan had merchandise, which consisted of 24 bales of good-quality raw silk weighing 194 *puds* and 5.5 pounds. It was worth 3,882 rubles, 25 *altyns*—or 20 rubles a *pud*; 510 *ansyrs* of red silk worth 382 rubles—or 25 *altyns* per *ansyr*; a rug worth 2 rubles; 2 bags worth 8 *griven*; three bales of colored silk each weighing 255 *ansyrs* and worth 612 rubles; 3 rugs worth 3 rubles and three bags worth 40 *altyns*; ninety *ansyr* of red silk worth 67 rubles; a bag worth 4 *griven*; 58 bales of fine leather (not dyed) worth 69 rubles and 20

¹*Ibid.*, file1, f. 2.

²Peter Khovanskii was the *voevoda* of Astrakhan.

³*TsGADA*, Coll. 100 (1706), file 1, ff. 14-21.

altyns—or 40 *altyns* a bale. A rug worth one ruble; two mantles worth 8 *griven*; and two Ardebil weaves worth one ruble.

The total value of the merchandise was 5,024 rubles, 18 *altyns*, and 2 *den'gi*. The duty paid according to the agreement was 251 rubles, 7 *altyns*, and half a quarter *den'gi*—or 10 *den'eg* from each ruble of merchandise.

They also purchased two crates of goods in Astrakhan consisting of 3 Kashan sashes and 1,700 cups made of clay. The duty on these items was paid by the seller.

The total weight of all the goods was 255 *puds* and 22 pounds, for which they paid 255 rubles, 18 *altyns*, and 2 *den'gi*—or 1 ruble per *pud* in transport costs.

They had 25 *puds* and 22 pounds of provisions. According to Your Majesty's decree and the agreement no duty was collected for their provisions. Four men accompanied Torosov.

The Julfa Armenian, Abraham Voskanov, his brother Kevant, and their companion Paul Petrov brought nine bales of low-quality silk weighing 68 *puds* and 26.5 pounds worth 1098 rubles and 20 *altyns*—or 16 rubles per *pud*. They also had 15 bales of good-quality raw silk weighing 112 *puds* and 1.5 pounds worth 2240 rubles; 10 *ansyrs* of dyed silk worth 9 rubles; four bales of spun cotton weighing 25 *puds* and 23.5 pounds worth 255 rubles, 29 *altyns*, and 1 *den'ga*—or 10 rubles a *pud*.

The total merchandise was worth 3604 rubles, 7 *altyns*, and 3 *den'gi*, for which they paid a duty of 180 rubles and 3 *altyns*...

In Astrakhan they purchased 5 boxes of ointments, 3 fine Kahsan weaves, 550 sashes, 20 rolls of printed cloth, 7 Ardebil weaves, 100 rolls of red calico cloth, 255 *ansyrs* of dyed silk; and 92 gray sheepskins.¹ The duty on these items was paid by the seller.

The total weight of the merchandise was 241 *puds* and 26 pounds, for which they paid an additional 241 rubles, 21 *altyns*, and 4 *den'gi*—or one ruble per *pud*, in transport costs.

They had 23 *puds* and 18 pounds of provisions. According to His Majesty's order, no duty was paid for collected from their provisions. Five men accompanied them.

The Armenian from Julfa, Manul Vartanov and his companion Safar Vartanov had 12 bales of low-quality raw silk weighing 79 *puds* and 32 pounds, worth 1,276 rubles, 12 *griven*—or 16 rubles a *pud*; 3 rolls of high-quality black shawl, worth 2 rubles, 23 *altyns*, and 2 *den'gi*—or 30

¹Refers to the famous Astrakhan *karakul* black or gray sheepskin.

altyns per roll; 9 thin cotton veils, worth ten rubles; 5 rolls of silk Shemakhi shawls, worth 8 rubles—or one ruble and 20 *altyns* per roll; 5 Ardebil weaves worth 4.5 rubles; one smooth partially-silk weave worth 1.5 rubles; two quilted¹ silk jackets worth 8 rubles; 8 Ardebil weaves worth 4 rubles; 6 high-quality Tabriz sashes, worth 12 rubles—or 2 rubles each; 4 *ansyrs* Tabrizi silk, worth 5 rubles and 2 *griven*—or 1 ruble and 10 *altyns* per *ansyr*; and 3 small rolls of thin Indian cotton cloth, worth 25 *altyns*.

The entire merchandise was worth 1,333 rubles and 15 *altyns*, for which they paid a duty of 66 rubles, 22 *altyns*, and half a *den'gi*; that is 10 *den'eg* per ruble of merchandise.

They purchased the following items in Astrakhan: 3 Tabrizi printed cloth; 2 rolls of silken Shemakhi cloth; 500 silk²kerchiefs; 2 cotton weaves, 2 silken weaves, and 2 woolen weaves. Duty on these was paid by the seller.

The total merchandise weighed 84 *puds* and 20 pounds, for which they paid 84.5 rubles in transport costs or 1 ruble per *pud*. They had 8 *puds* and 18 pounds of provisions for which no duty was collected. Three men accompanied them.

The Armenian from Julfa, Zakar Iakovlev had 12 bales of low-quality silk weighing 75 *puds* and 38.5 pounds, worth 1,215 rubles and 4 *griven*—or 16 rubles per *pud*. He also had 2 bales of cotton weighing 12 *puds* and worth 120 rubles—or 10 rubles per *pud*. There was also 180 pieces of red calico worth 144 rubles; 62 thin cotton veils worth 49 rubles and 20 *altyns*; 81 long cotton veils, worth 81 rubles; 2 carpets worth 5 rubles; 70 gray sheepskins worth 49 rubles; 2 window coverings worth 7 rubles; 10 black sheepskins worth 5 rubles; 60 pestles worth 150 rubles; 17 bales of dyed leather worth 27 rubles and 2 *griven*; 2 bales of dyed-silk weighing 510 *ansyrs* worth 408 rubles—or 8 *griven* per *ansyrs*; 2 shawls worth 2 rubles; 2 bags worth 8 *griven*; a bale of 155 of quality silk worth 229.5 rubles; a sash worth one ruble; 2 sacks worth 4 *griven*; 2 Kashan embroideries worth 1 ruble and 4 *griven*; one bale of green-dyed silk weighing 255 *ansyrs*, worth 229.5 rubles; a bag worth 4 *griven*; and 2 Kashan quilts worth one ruble and 4 *griven*.

The entire load was valued at 2,744 rubles and 20 *altyns*. A duty of 137 rubles, 7 *altyns*, and 4 *den'gi*—or 10 *den'eg* per one ruble of merchandise, was collected...Forty *ansyrs* of colored Tabrizi silk was pur-

¹Text has the Persian word *sūzanī* (needle work, embroidered).

²Text has *gulbeldev*, from the Persian word *golbaban*.

chased in Astrakhan. The seller paid the duty. The merchandise was weighed at 143 *puds* and 22 pounds. Transport cost of 143 rubles, 18 *altyns*, and 2 *den'gi* was paid. In addition, they had 14 *puds* and 14 pounds of provisions for which, according to the agreement with the Armenian Company, no duty was collected. They had one purser and 3 workers with them.

The Armenian from Julfa, Bogdan Petrov and his partner Apkar Babumov possessed 7 bales of low-quality silk weighing 54 *puds* and 19.5 pounds, worth 871 rubles, 8 *griven*—or 16 rubles per *pud*; 5 bales good-quality silk weighing 40 *pud* and 39 pounds worth 819.5 rubles—or 20 rubles per *pud*; a bale of 255 *ansyrs* of dyed silk worth 204 rubles—or 8 *griven* per *ansyr*; an embroidered sash worth 40 *altyns*; a bag worth 4 *griven*; a bale of 255 *ansyrs* of high-quality silk, worth 229.5 rubles—or 30 *altyns* per *ansyr*; a sash worth one ruble; a sack worth 4 *griven*; 2 Kashan quilts worth 1 ruble and 4 *griven*; a bale of cotton weighing 11 *puds* and 20 pounds, worth 115 rubles—or 10 rubles per *pud*.

The total worth of the merchandise was 2,244 rubles, 6 *altyns*, and 4 *den'gi*. They paid a duty of 112 rubles, 7 *altyns*—or 10 *den'eg* per ruble worth of goods. Their merchandise weighed 125 *puds* and 39 pounds, for which they paid an additional 125 rubles, 32 *altyns*, and 3 *den'gi* in transport fees.

They had 12 *puds* and 23 pounds of provisions for which they were not charged any duty... They had three men working for them.

The Armenian from Nakhichevan, Ilias Il'ina and his friend Prince Kiazov had 14 bales consisting of 120 batches of red calico each, for a total of 1750 batches, worth 1,400 rubles—or 8 *griven* per batch. In addition they carried 14 strips of felt worth 1 ruble and 4 *griven*. They paid a duty of 70 rubles, 2 *altyns*, and 2 *den'gi*—or 10 *den'eg* per ruble of goods. The merchandise weighed 70 *puds* and 9 pounds, for which they paid 70 rubles, 7 *altyns*, and 3 *den'gi* in transport costs...

They had 7 *puds* and 1 pound of provisions, but due to the agreement with the Armenians of Julfa no duty was levied on that.¹

The Armenian from Ardebil, Ahverdi Avasov had a bale of 255 *ansyrs* of dyed silk, worth 216 rubles and 25 *altyns*—or 28 *altyns* and 2 *den'gi* per *ansyr*; a shawl worth one ruble; a bag worth 4 *griven*; 250 batches of red cloth from Shemakhi, worth 200 rubles; and 2 felt strips worth 6 *altyns* and 4 *den'gi*. His goods were assessed at 418 rubles, 11

¹It seems that all Armenian merchants in Persia benefited from the agreement made by the Armenian Trading Company of Julfa.

altyns, and 4 *den'gi*. He paid a duty of 20 rubles, 30 *altyns*, and half a *den'gi*...He also purchased 255 *ansyrs* of dyed silk and a sack in Astrakhan...

The total weight of his merchandise was 27 *puds* and 1 pound, for which he was charged 27 rubles and 5 *den'eg* in transport fees...He had 2 *puds* and 28 pounds worth of provision...Two men accompanied him

Recorded by: Grigorii Molchanov and Ivan Tatarinov¹

58

Petition of Khachik Avanesov to Peter the Great

(16 October 1706)²

Your Majesty! By Your Order and by the former agreement of our company with Your State, we Armenian merchants brought merchandise from Persia to Astrakhan and Moscow, and transported it to Europe. We paid your treasury various sums in duties and transport costs. On October 14 of this year, a man called Koz'ma, whose patronymic and position is unknown, came to our trading houses, which are located on the left side of the Bogoiavlenskii Monastery, insulted me, an Armenian merchant, and claimed that the storehouses were given to him. He did not produce any official papers. On 16 October, following his false petition, I an Armenian merchant, was taken to the Department of Foreign Affairs and was held under arrest...I request that according to Russian Law,³ the said affair and Koz'ma be investigated. I also add that according to the agreements signed between the Armenian merchants and Russia, our safety and that of our merchandise was not to be violated...⁴

¹On 11 January 1707, Torosov and his group returned to Moscow from Europe and sought permission to return to Persia via Astrakhan, *TsGADA*, Coll. 100 (1707-1711), file 2, ff. 10-11.

²*TsGADA*, Coll. 100 (1706), file 1, ff. 9-10.

³Refers to the Russian Law Code of 1649.

⁴A day later, on 17 October, the Department of Foreign Affairs ordered that Koz'ma be found and the matter investigated.

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Israel Ori to Peter the Great(29 October 1706)¹

I have traveled to Rome and am carrying a letter from the Pope to the Shah of Persia...I humbly request that Your Majesty grant me a letter to the Shah so that I could travel to Persia without hindrance. I also beg that Your Highness ask the Shah to treat the Christians under his rule well and to order his governors to cease tormenting them...The Georgians and the Armenians are prepared to fight. They can produce fifty thousand armed men. The Persians would not dare to cross into the region and if Your Majesty goes to war with the Turks, the Armenian and Georgian Christians can attack Anatolia, where many Christians reside...I request that Your Highness send a number of Russian officers with me to observe the conditions in Persia and to meet with the Armenian religious and secular leaders to ascertain the devotion of my people to Your Majesty...

60

Peter the Great to Shah Soltān Hōsein(1 February 1707)²

Israel Ori, who has served us in the rank of colonel, is being dispatched to You, Our Brother on a mission from the Pope. He is to discuss a number of issues, including the conditions of your Christian population. He has asked Us to grant him an official decree as an envoy to Your Majesty, our friend and neighbor. We request that you recall our friendly ties and receive him with kindness...

Written in Moscow in the Year of Our Lord 1707 in the month of February, on the first day of the month, on the 25th year of Our Reign.³

¹*Ezov*, doc. 141 (loose translation from German).

²*TsGADA*, Coll. 100 (1707-1711), file 1, ff. 80-82, also in *Ezov*, doc. 143.

³The Permission to finally leave Moscow was granted on 14 June 1707. Thirty seven Europeans and Russians accompanied Ori to Isfahan: 1) Moritz Daniel Utholtz, a merchant who was born in Lübeck and who had lived in Moscow for eleven years. 2) Philippe François Coulon, a teacher from Paris, who had come to Russia ten years before to teach French to the children of Prince Golytsin. 3) Simon Graff, a tailor from Switzerland who had lived in Moscow for twenty years. 4) Johan Fabian Krechler, a coppersmith from Saxony who had

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*Peter the Great to Matthew Golovin*¹

(1 March 1707)²

The Great Sovereign Tsar and Great Prince Peter Alekseevich etc...has decreed that according to the agreement granted the Armenian merchants from Persia, the following Armenians: Ivan Pavlov, Melizei Petrov, Serkis Avetov, and their companions, totaling seven in number, are per-

come to Moscow with his father and had lived there for nine years. 5) Johann Friderich von Boemeln, a bombardier from Memel in the principality of Brandenburg who had arrived in Moscow a year before. 6) Jan Warsowicz Sikrinski, a Pole who had come to Russia with Venetian ship builders eleven years before. 7) Frantz Rudolf Zohn, an officer from Hamburg who was in the service of Russia. 8) Andres Larson Wolff, from Memel, who for eight years served as a retainer. 9) Niklaus Michelson, from Brunswick in Brandenburg, an officer who was in the service of Russia for three years. 10) Heinrich Johan Rateken, a merchant from Lübeck who had arrived in Moscow a year before. 11) Andreas Hoffer, a merchant from Strassburg who had lived in Moscow for over a year. 12) Joseph Grondt, a merchant from Gdansk who had arrived in Moscow a year before. 13) Jan Polsohn, a navy officer from Gdansk who had arrived in Russia a year before. 14) Martine Brande, an officer from Brandenburg in the service of Russia. 15) Simon Weineter, a retainer from Hungary, who had come to Moscow with the Danish envoy four years before. 16) Tomas Fordt, a sailor from Holland in Russia for a year. 17) Arendhand (sic) Rode, a cavalry officer from Austria. 18) Michell Herman from Copenhagen. 19) Endere que (sic) Kritonoff from Hungary. 20) Jacob Reich, a merchant from Amsterdam. 21) Johannes Joachimus Schröder, a German linguist. 22) Ori's clerk, Peter Simonnaire. Others in Ori's suite included Joachim Kraft, Philip Kilbürger, Fabian Kreisler, Jan Seler, Jan Frantz, Jacob Thun, Jan Peterson Anse, Michael Dorfeich, Zacharias Wishtok, Tomas Jacobfrei, and three others, all of whom were in the service of the Europeans travelers. Two Russians, Alexei Ostaf'ev from Nizhen and Fedor Fedorov from Kiev accompanied the embassy. A number of Greeks and Armenians joined Ori as well. They included among others: Yuri Nikolaev, Anastas Nikolaev, Shahin son of Sukiaz, Avet, son of Sargis, Aghajan, son of Ohanis, Gaspar, son of Avak, Avet, son of Murat, Vardan, son of Toros, Vardan, son of Esyaron, Zakar, and Stepan, *TsGADA*, Coll. 100 (1707-1711), file 1, ff. 89-97, 108-110.

¹Matvei Alekseevich Golovin was a courtier (*stol'nik*).

²*TsGADA*, Coll. 100 (1707-1711), file 2, f. 7. Other documents confirm the activity of Armenian merchants in Russia and Europe, see *ibid.*, file 3, ff. 1-2; file 2, ff. 20, 22, 23, 54, 56, 69, 77, 79, 110-116.

mitted to proceed with their raw silk from Archangel to the German lands. They have paid 1,655 rubles, 17 *altyns*, and 3 *den'gi* in duty fees for 60 bales of silk of mixed quality, weighing 471 *puds* and 12.5 pounds. All transport costs are included in the above fees...

Written by Vasili Posnikov.

62

*Petition of Johannes Joachim Schröder*¹

(May 1707)²

Your Majesty, I arrived in your land from Holland via Archangel with Armenian merchants. Our arrival is recorded in the chancery of foreign affairs. I wish to leave Moscow for Persia, where I intend to pursue my studies of eastern languages. I petition Your Highness for a travel permit, which will allow me to travel to Astrakhan and from there to Persia...

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Peter the Great to Peter Shafirov

(11 March 1708)³

Armenian merchants from Persia have been for many years bringing their goods via Astrakhan to Moscow, from where they took the merchandise to German lands. They have paid thousands of rubles in duties. In 1706 the treasury collected some 30,000 rubles. There have been complaints that in 1705 and 1706 the French⁴ have taken thousands of rubles from the Armenian merchants returning from Germany thus causing losses both to the Armenian Trading Company and to our treasury...It is decreed that the Armenian merchants take their goods via Great Novgorod and Rugodev to St. Petersburg from where they shall continue by sea to the German lands, thus avoiding the French...⁵

¹Johann Joachim Schröder (1680-1756), a German linguist at the University of Marburg from 1712 to 1756. He wrote the "Thesaurus lingue Armeniace" printed in Amsterdam in 1711.

²*Ibid.*, f. 98.

³*TsGADA*, Coll. 100 (1708), file 2, ff. 1-2. The decree is in *PSZR*, IV, 402-403; also see *SAAN*, I, 6.

⁴Although the text has "French" it probably refers to Europeans.

⁵Peter's interest in this trade is clearly evident by his decrees encouraging and facilitating it, see *ibid.*, file 5, ff. 13-16, 21-22; *ibid.*, (1709), file 1, ff. 5, 7,

64

Kat'oghikos Aghek'sandr of Julfa¹ to Peter the Great
(7 June 1709)²

To His Majesty, the Tsar and the Great Prince Peter Alekseevich, the Autocrat of All Russia, from the slave of Jesus Christ, Aghek'sandr, Kat'oghikos of All Armenians residing in Vagharshapat at the holy see of Ējmiatsin...

This is to inform Your August Majesty that our beloved son Israel [Ori] visited us in Ējmiatsin and presented himself at our seat. He told us of Your kindness and love toward our people. Our happiness knows no bounds and we ask the blessing of God upon Your Highness so that You can continue to protect our nation and all Christians. Our son and brother [Ori] during his visit here, on his way to Persia, made us happy by Your Highness' kindness toward him. May Jesus Christ assure the longevity of Your Reign. May God strengthen You against Your enemies and destroy them with His wrath...

65

Minas Vardapet to the Department of Foreign Affairs
(21 June 1709)³

Minas Vardapet, who has remained in Moscow, following the departure of his colleague Israel Ori to Persia, has sent the following petition to the Department of Foreign Affairs. The scribes Mikhail Rodostamov and Vasili Stepanov received the petition.

In January of this year, the Armenian Ivanese, who is at present on his way to Persia, made insulting remarks about Vardapet Minas at the gate

12-13, 15, 19. On 13 March 1710 the Armenian merchant Safar Vasiliev petitioned Russia for permission to establish silk production in Terek. He added that the entire enterprise would be headed by his family and asked that an Armenian church be built there, *ibid.* (1710), file 3, ff. 1-9.

¹Kat'oghikos at the Holy See of Ējmiatsin (1706-1714). Kat'oghikos Aghek'sandr was consecrated on 7 September 1706, more than a year after the death of Kat'oghikos Nahapet, who died on 13 June 1705. The delay was probably due to seeking approval from Constantinople.

²*TsGADA*, Coll. 100 (1707-1711) file 1, f. 32. Russian translation in *Ezov*, doc. 159 is dated July 7 by mistake.

³*TsGADA*, Coll. 100 (1701-1711), file 1, ff. 47-49.

of the Department of Foreign Affairs. He made these vile remarks in Armenian, in the presence of another Armenian, Ghukas, and accused Minas and Israel Ori of being spies. He added that Ori had gone to Persia not as an envoy, but as a spy on a mission of destroying the Persian State...Minas, who was in the upper floor of the department, overheard these remarks. The Armenian Safar Bagdasarov, the interpreter Miron Mustofin, and Peter Novokreshchen heard them as well.

Minas Vardapet requests that His Majesty order that the said Armenian be detained in Kazan or Astrakhan until such time when Israel Ori returns from Persia, so that Ivan es would not endanger Ori or his mission.

Note: On 27 June 1709, by the decree of His Highness to Count Gabriel Ivanovich Golovkin¹ written by the Tsar's private secretary, Peter Pavlovich Shafirov, an order was dispatched to the governor of Kazan, Peter Matveevich Apraksin,² as well as to Astrakhan, to hold the Armenian Ivan es Avetov and not permit him to proceed to Persia...

66

Shah Solṭān Hōsein to Peter the Great (1709)³

Israel Ori, a high-standing envoy from His Highness, the Pope, has arrived at our court. He has been to the court of Your Majesty and has petitioned us on behalf of the Christians who live in our domain. Your Majesty is well aware why this person has come to our land and the content of his petitions. We have read your friendly remarks and the details of the mission of Israel Ori.

May God grant it that our two governments continue to maintain our friendly relations. I assure you that those Christians who suffered our wrath were guilty and deserved severe punishment. All governments punish those who go against the ruler. However, since receiving your kind letter, we have decided to spare the life of these Christians and permit them to live, as in the past, under our protection, provided that they

¹Golovkin was, at this time, the Chancellor of Russia, see biographical notes.

²F. M. Apraksin (1661-1728) commanded the Caspian Flotilla during the Persian campaign. He held various posts and was close to the Tsar.

³*Ezov*, doc. 160, in Persian. *Ezov* noted that it was probably written sometime after July 7 and before September 20. The Russian translation is in *TsGADA*, Coll. 77 (1709), file 1, ff. 1-2.

do not constitute a danger to our throne. We have permitted Israel Ori to return to Your Majesty with our message.¹

67

Israel Ori to Count Golovkin
(28 February and 1 March 1711)²

An Armenian from Erzerum, who has come to Persia for trade has told me that the Ottomans are preparing a great force of cavalry and infantry to gather in Constantinople and the Crimea. The reason for this gathering was unknown. The citizens of Qandahar have decided to rebel and declare autonomy. They have put to death the local governor and many respectable citizens. They have elected their own leader. Hearing this, the Shah gathered an army and dispatched it to destroy the rebels, but the rebels defeated his army. The Shah has decided to gather new forces and has recruited 300 men by force in Shemakhi. God knows what he plans to do in other cities of the region. In the meantime, some 70,000 Uzbeks (who are called Bukharans, Khivans, and Balkhans) have attacked Mashhad and have devastated the surrounding villages of that city. They have killed many and have taken 40,000 hostages. The Shah has now ordered the khan of Shemakhi to contribute more troops from his realm. The khan of Shemakhi has written to the Shah that the Russians have gathered large forces in Astrakhan and the Terek basin and plan to attack Persia. The Shah, meanwhile, has sent an officer to Aiuka, the Kalmyk khan to aid him against the Uzbeks...

My vessel was damaged and was forced to winter in Nizovoi. The vessel with my men and goods reached Astrakhan. The horses, which I had purchased by the order of His Majesty, were also brought to Astrakhan. Peter Matveevich Apraksin, however, for reasons unknown to me,

¹On 20 September Ori wrote to Chancellor Peter Matv'eevich Gagarin that he had arrived in Shemakhi and that the situation in northern Persia and the Caspian littoral was unstable, due to uprisings of various Muslim tribesmen. He noted that 20 Armenian households had left the Gilan-Mazandaran region and were seeking refuge in Christian-dominated lands. He added that a number of Armenian merchants wished to transfer their headquarters to Moscow. The letter is in French and is in Ezov, doc. 162, Russian translation in *TsGADA*, Coll. 100 (1707-1711), file 1, ff. 57-58.

²*TsGADA*, Coll. 100 (1711-1714), file 1, ff. 37-38. The letters, written in Armenian, were sent to Minas Vardapet, Russian translation in *ibid.*, ff. 39-42.

took the goods and locked them in warehouses. Four of the best horses were also taken. Upon my arrival in Shemakhi I was asked to take care of the goods of the merchant Mikhail Vasil'ev, whose boat had sunk. He had survived and some of his goods were washed ashore and were taken by the local inhabitants. He had petitioned the Shah to have them released, but he died. His friends asked me to take over the matter. I petitioned the Shah and ordered that 15,000 rubles be collected from the inhabitants who had taken the goods and given to me. The people swore that most of the items had sunk and finally gave me a small portion of the said money. After that I left for Astrakhan. Upon arrival in Moscow I shall produce the necessary papers, sworn affidavits, and answer all inquiries.¹

68

Decree of the Russian Senate(14 May 1711)²

1) Armenians from Persia who are members of the Trading Company shall pay the duty agreed in the year 175 (1667) for their goods brought from Persia or Europe...2) Armenians shall pay the entire duty on said goods in Moscow. They shall not be required to pay any other duty in the various points of transit or be delayed in any fashion. Goods from Persia en route to Europe shall be assessed in Moscow and not in Astrakhan. The treasury in Moscow will collect duty on said goods. Goods coming from Europe via Archangel shall also be assessed in Moscow and nowhere else...3) Transport costs for the said goods from Astrakhan to

¹On 20 September 1710 Ori had written to Tsar Peter stating that while he was away his warehouse was robbed. Upon questioning his Armenian and Muslim staff, they asserted (after beatings and torture) that a certain official, Captain Zakhar Vishtok and his wife may have been guilty. A number of Armenian clerics also signed Ori's letter, *TsGADA*, Coll. 100 (1712), file 5, f. 3 (in Armenian); Russian translation in *ibid.*, f. 6. In January 1711 the commandant of Astrakhan, Mikhail Il'ich Chirikov was informed by Captain Zakhar that Ori had usurped the property of a dead Armenian merchant. The report was submitted to governor Apraksin, *TsGADA*, Coll. 77 (1710-1712), file d/b, ff. 6-7. On 5 October 1711 Peter the Great ordered Apraksin to release Ori's companions and goods so that they could proceed to Moscow via Saratov and Kazan, *TsGADA*, Coll. 100 (1711-1714), file 1, ff. 49-50.

²*Proceedings of the State Senate during the Reign of Peter the Great*, I (St. Petersburg, 1880), doc. 101.

Archangel shall be 20 *altyns* for each *pud* of merchandise. These costs shall be paid to the Moscow customs...4) The Armenian merchants are to be provided with boats and other transport facilities, as well as guards when necessary. They are also permitted to have retainers and to carry provisions. 5) Diamonds, precious stones, and pearls brought by Armenian merchants are exempt from duty so that the availability of such items may increase here and the Armenians divert this trade from Turkey to Russia. For the Armenians have stated that the Turks do not search them and that they take pearls and jewels to Europe without the payment of taxes. The profits of the jewel trade—sold in Europe—is then turned into merchandise for which the Armenians pay a duty upon transiting the goods through or selling them in Russia...6) The Armenians shall pay set storage fees¹ for goods stored in Astrakhan, Kazan, and Archangel, in Moscow.

69

List of Merchandise Sent by Ori to Russia(27 September 1711)²

The following merchandise belonging to the former envoy, Israel Ori, was released for transport from Astrakhan to Kazan on 27th day of September 1711.

A load containing eleven spans³ of printed Tabrizi cloth; eighteen spans of colorful Isfahani chintz;⁴ four spans of Tabrizi silk cloth; two medium-size blouses made of Tabrizi gauze; one Tabrizi gauze veil; eight spans of Kashani silk; four spans of Tabrizi velvet; two bolts⁵ of Indian material for kerchiefs; fifty-three spans of Tabrizi printed cloth; one bolt of material for small black scarfs; sixteen spans of Gilani silk;⁶ four spans of printed silk; sixty-nine identical veils; and two spans of Kashani printed cloth. The above load was packed and sewn in a common rug.⁷

¹Text has the Persian term *anbar* fees.

²*TsGADA*, Coll. 100 (1711) file 1, ff. 408-414.

³Fabrics were measured in spans, which was an arms-length.

⁴Text has the Persian word *qalam-kārī*.

⁵Text has the Persian word *tūp*.

⁶Text has the Persian word *keḡ*.

⁷The term describes an inexpensive rug or *kilim*. The woolen covering could be reused and kept the merchandise from getting damp.

A load containing eighty-six spans of muslin; four Persian tablecloths; one bolt of large black kerchief material; two bolts of small black kerchief material; five bolts of fine gauze; nineteen colorful silk on cotton bed coverings; fourteen spans of narrow printed Tabrizi cloth; one bolt of fine gauze; two spans of linen¹ cloth; and five spans of Tabrizi printed cloth. The above load was packed and sewn in a common rug.

A load containing eighteen spans of coarse glossy Ardebili cotton material; six spans of printed Tabrizi cloth; nineteen spans of medium-size printed Tabrizi cloth; and forty spans of wide printed cloth. The above load was packed and sewn in a common rug.

A load containing nineteen spans of printed Tabrizi cloth; one span of Ardebili silk; two spans of printed Kashani cloth; twenty-one spans of muslin; two spans of printed Kashani cloth; nine spans of printed cotton cloth; four colorful floor coverings; twenty-one Indian curtains; five spans of calico; five spans of cotton cloth; sixteen spans of printed cloth; twenty-seven spans of printed Kashani cloth; one span of printed Rori² cloth; and one span of printed Kashani cloth. The above load was packed and sewn in a common rug.

A load containing twelve spans of woven³ cloth; one span of printed Rori cloth, which was soiled; forty-three spans of narrow printed Tabrizi cloth; seven measures of lace made of fine silk;⁴ one bolt of large lace made of fine silk; twenty-three spans of muslin; twenty-six spans of printed woven cloth; eleven spans of printed Tabrizi cloth; and five spans of printed Ardebili cloth. The above load was packed and sewn in a common rug.

A load containing thirty-four spans of printed Tabrizi printed; fifteen bolts of Kashani gauze; eight gold-embroidered⁵ vests;⁶ four measures of silver-embroidered lace; thirty-six measures of medium-size lace made

¹Text has the Persian word *seft*.

²A region in Sind, India.

³Text has the Persian word *baf*.

⁴Text has *chaparbaf*, a corruption of the Persian word *čehārbaf*, which is a kind of rich silk.

⁵Text has *izarbaf*, a variation of the Persian word *zarbāf*.

⁶Text has the Persian word *nīmtane*.

of fine silk; six measures of wide lace made of fine silk; forty-six spans of printed Tabrizi cloth; and forty-eight prayer shawls. The above load was packed and sewn in a common rug.

A load containing eighty spans of printed Tabrizi cloth and one thousand two hundred and twelve blouses of a transparent material. The above load was packed and sewn in a common rug.

A load containing sixty-seven spans of printed Tabrizi cloth, forty-nine spans of printed Rori cloth, and five garments.¹ The above load was packed and sewn in a common rug.

A load containing fifty spans of printed Tabrizi cloth; seventy-seven spans of red calico and forty spans of printed Ardebili cloth. The above load was packed and sewn in a common rug.

A load containing seventy-nine spans of printed Tabrizi cloth; fifty measures of octagon-shaped lace; nine measures of round-shaped lace, and eighty-three prayer shawls.² The above load was packed and sewn in a common rug.

A load containing one hundred and nineteen spans of printed Tabrizi cloth and eight garments. The above load was packed and sewn in a common rug.

A load containing seventeen spans of printed Tabrizi cloth; four Tabrizi curtains; twenty-three measures of Morocco leather; thirteen garments, and one span of printed Ardebili cloth. The above load was packed and sewn in a common rug.

A load containing six bolts of printed cotton kerchief material; one hundred and five spans of muslin; one span of linen; four spans of printed Tabrizi cloth and two spans of printed Kashani cloth. The above load was packed and sewn in a common rug.

A load containing one hundred and fifty spans of red calico from Shemakhi and four bales of red calico, 150 spans per bale, for a total of

¹Text has *gava* a variation for the Persian word *qabā*.

²The text has the Persian words *darak* and *namāz*.

six hundred spans. The above load was packed and sewn in a common rug.

A load containing four carpets; one Tabrizi rug; ten gray sheepskins from Mashhad; one black sheepskin; six carpets; five hundred and thirty-eight measures of silk kerchiefs; one turban; two silk table cloths embroidered with silver; one silver-embroidered sash; three spans of printed Tabrizi cloth; one span of woven cloth; two silk curtains; three sets of silk bed covering each set containing four covers; thirty-one breeches made of brocade;¹ and one span of printed Tabrizi cloth. The above load was packed and sewn in a common rug.

A trunk containing forty-two spans of woven cloth; forty bolts of Indian kerchief material; twelve spans of plain calico; thirty-one Indian curtains; fifteen spans of woven cloth; and one bolt of printed Tabrizi cloth.

A trunk containing eight spans of muslin; two Indian curtains; twelve spans of smooth Kashani silk cloth; two spans of low-quality Kashani silk cloth; two spans of embroidered taffeta; seven silk shawls; seventeen spans of gold-embroidered cloth; Eight spans of fancy embroidered coverings; four silk coverings; one Chinese silk covering; three gold-embroidered garments; five spans of embroidered Gilani silk cloth; four spans of embroidered taffeta; four reels of silk thread; two smooth silk coverings; eighteen spans of Ardebili silk cloth; twenty-one spans of red-colored calico cloth; three silk coverings; thirty Indian curtains; and three spans of printed Tabrizi cloth.

A trunk containing forty-eight spans of muslin; one bolt of coarse cloth; and one piece of printed Kashani cloth.

A trunk containing forty-five spans of woven printed cloth, thirty-eight spans of Indian kerchief material and thirty white sheepskins.²

A trunk containing one silver-embroidered sash; nine gold-embroidered girdles; seven spans of embroidered cloth; eighteen silk shawls; two measures of silk cloth; two Tabrizi linen floor coverings;³ two floor mats;

¹Text has the Persian words *parče* and *šalvār*.

²Text has the Persian word *mask*.

³Text has the Persian word *qaşb*.

twenty-three prayer shawls; twenty spans of medium-size silk lace; one span of octagon-shaped lace; twelve high-quality Tabrizi vests; twenty-four spans of taffeta; four identical veils; forty-one spans of Tabrizi silk cloth; twenty spans of low-quality silk cloth; thirty-eight spans of silk cloth with thin lines; three spans of printed Kashani cloth; and five silk curtains.

A chest containing twenty-two Indian curtains; fifteen soiled silk shawls; one vest; one soiled pillow case; seven soiled prayer shawls; two soiled spans of linen cloth; one bolt of cotton kerchief material; six bolts of Kashani cotton kerchief material; half a bolt of Kashani kerchief material; one span of Tabrizi silk cloth; two cotton and linen robes; three soiled silver-embroidered sashes; eleven common sashes; five soiled taffetas; three bolts of soiled silk kerchief material; one Kashani floor covering; twenty-four soiled bolts of Kashani kerchief material; one bolt of soiled silver-embroidered kerchief material; seven soiled prayer shawls; twenty-nine soiled silver-embroidered sashes; Five gold-embroidered soiled vests; one soiled gold-embroidered jacket; one span of soiled silk weave; sixteen soiled silk weave; three bolts of lace; four bolts of printed silk lace; three bolts of octagon-shaped lace; seven spans of printed Ardebili cloth; two spans of printed Tabrizi cloth; one bolt of printed kerchief material; four spans of Turkish red calico; four bolts of Shemakhi kerchief material; twelve spans of Tabrizi silk cloth; one woven covering; three spans of printed Ardebili cloth; and two bolts of Shemakhi kerchief material.

A trunk containing one measure of gold-embroidered silk; one measure of Kashani silk; twenty-four candlesticks; fifty reels of Shemakhi silk thread; two bolts of Shemakhi kerchief material; two bolts of medium-size linen shawl material; two bolts of small-size linen shawl material; three medium-size linen kerchief material; two bolts of small-size linen shawl material; two bolts of medium-size black shawl material; one bolt of small-size linen shawl material; one hood; one Shemakhi coarsely-woven rug; six bolts of medium- and small-size linen shawl material; two bolts of medium-size kerchief material; fourteen Indian curtains; nine Turkish taffetas; one bolt of medium-size kerchief material; sixteen *arshins* of red Persian cotton cloth of low quality; and three spans of printed Ardebili cloth.

A case containing eleven silk veils; one and half spans of red calico; one brocaded breeches; three spans of printed Tabrizi cloth; one span of printed Rori cloth; two spans of printed Ardebili cloth; and twenty pounds of raw silk of good quality.

A load consisting of two cotton rugs; ten large, medium, and small carpets; one tribal rug (*kilim*) with a pattern; one new tribal rug with no pattern; and two old tribal rugs;

A load consisting of twenty-four fox furs; twenty-two leopard skins; three tribal rugs; twenty lynx furs; and fifteen medium- and small-size cotton carpets.

A box containing two spans of soiled cotton-woolen cloth; four soiled gold-embroidered vests; one small soiled gold-embroidered vest; two spans of soiled smooth silk cloth; one span of soiled stripped silk material; one bolt of soiled black kerchief material; one soiled Indian curtain; three soiled white taffetas; four spans of soiled printed Isfahani cloth; six spans of soiled woven printed material; twenty-three soiled white large- and medium-size muslin; one span of soiled taffeta; nine spans of soiled cotton cloth; one floor covering; one old rug; twelve bales of raw silk of good quality; seven bales of raw silk of low quality; one bale of red-dyed cotton; and two bales of raw cotton.

The above loads, bales, trunks, chests, and raw silk and cotton were inspected by the commandant and the customs of Astrakhan. The said merchandise was sent to Kazan and with the exception of the raw silk continued to Moscow by the order of the Department of Foreign Affairs dated 25 February 1712.¹

¹Some of the above merchandise was soiled and damaged. It either belonged to Ori, or was part of the merchandise belonging to Mikhail Vasil'ev (see doc. 67). It seems that the rest of the merchandise belonged to Ori, who realizing that he could not return to Persia, borrowed funds and together with some partners purchased goods to make a huge profit. Taking advantage of Ori's position, they hoped to facilitate the shipment of their goods from Astrakhan to Moscow. A document written on 2 May 1713 states that Il'ia Zakharev, an Armenian merchant from Astrakhan had dispatched his senior clerk to Persia with 2,090 rubles worth of merchandise. When the latter died in Mashhad, Zakharev asked Ori to use his influence at the Persian court to recover the goods or money. Although

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Governor Apraksin to Peter the Great(7 November 1711)¹

In September of this year I received a letter from Mikhail Chirikov, chief commandant of Astrakhan. It stated that the envoy of the Pope, Israel Ori had returned from Persia by sea to Astrakhan and having lived there less than a month died in August. He was buried according to the Armenian rights in the Armenian church at Astrakhan...Chirikov sent the horses which Ori had purchased for Your Majesty to me in Kazan, The twenty horses were brought by Nikita Serbin and, following the instructions of Chancellor Gabriel Ivanovich Golovkin, are being sent to the Department of Foreign Affairs in Moscow to the attention of Vice-Chancellor Peter Pavlovich Shafirov...²

Ori managed to gather 1110 rubles, he incurred numerous expenses. The remainder he sent to Il'ia in cash and goods, *TsGADA*, Coll. 100, file 2, ff. 1-3.

¹*TsGADA*, Coll. 100 (1711-1714), file 1. f. 51.

²The document goes on to list the 19 stallions and one mare. One of the above stallions was left behind in Saransk due to illness and was taken care of by the local commandant, Saburov. Five men, Armenians and Tatars, were hired to take care of the horses, en-route. They were paid 1 ruble each per month, *ibid.*, ff. 52-54. Folios 113-119 list Ori's property, which was handed to his Armenian clerk by the Russian official Ivan Ignat'ev. It included: seven silver spoons, four silver tumblers, two silver trays, a large silver beaker made in Persia, a Persian saber gilded in silver, a pair of German pistols, a Turkish shield, 2 bags made of red velvet and embroidered with gold, a hunting horn decorated in gold, a Persian saddle decorated in silver, a silver harness, several silver bridles, a water-pipe decorated in silver, a Turkish saddle cloth embroidered in silver (text has *çaprak*), a Persian saddle cloth embroidered in gold, numerous camisoles, caftans, rolls of cotton and silk cloth, various lacquer and wooden boxes decorated in mother of pearl and ivory, boxes, gold rings, various copper and brass tableware, cups, pots, and pans, various furs, and fine cloths. Few of the items, mainly cloths and fabric, were sold in the bazaar of Astrakhan for over 100 rubles. In 1716 Minas returned to Persia to look for other items belonging to Ori, *TsGADA*, Coll. 100 (1716), file 3, f. 1.

71

The Department of Foreign Affairs to Peter the Great
(1711)¹

In the year 1702 Your Majesty ordered that Mahmet Tevkeleev serve as a Tatar (Turkish) interpreter in the Department of Foreign Affairs. His salary was designated at 35 rubles, 18 *altyns*, and 2 *den'gi* per annum. Last year (1710) Mahmet was dispatched with a message to the army. He disappeared without a trace and no one has been hired to replace him. The Armenian, Afonasiï Pankrat'ev, who came to Moscow with the Persian envoy and remained here, has petitioned that His Majesty appoint him as an interpreter of Persian at the Department of Foreign Affairs. He is originally from Shemakhi and came to Moscow six years ago with the Persian envoy. He accompanied the said envoy to Astrakhan on his return to Persia. He remained in Astrakhan for a year and then returned to Moscow. Since then he has served the Armenian merchants in Moscow as an interpreter. According to our interpreters, Afonasiï is fluent in Persian, Turkish, Armenian, and Russian.
Ivan Gubin.

72

Petition of Armenians in Georgia
(5 February 1712)²

In 1710 and 1711 we planned to travel to Moscow and Archangel with our merchandise. Upon arriving in Astrakhan, despite the intercession of the Persian Armenian merchants, we were not permitted to continue to Moscow and the treasury thus lost a great sum of money. We ask that Your Majesty grant us the same rights as the Persian Armenians to travel to Moscow and Archangel via Astrakhan. Your Majesty's treasury will benefit greatly from our trade. Signed by your slave Avtandel Mamajan, son of Arutiun and his partners in Tiflis.³

¹*TsGADA*, Coll. 100 (1710), file 2, ff. 1-2.

²*TsGADA*, Russia's Relations with Georgia (1712), file 1, f. 56

³On 12 February the Tsar decreed that the Armenian merchants in Georgia be given the same privileges as accorded to Persian Armenian merchants, *ibid.*, f. 57.

73

Minas Vardapet to Peter the Great(12 March 1712)¹

My friend Israel Ori wrote to me last year that following Your Majesty's order he was bringing 60 master craftsmen, accompanied by their wives and children, who could weave cloth of silk and other fine material. He requested that the Department of Foreign Affairs sent an order to Astrakhan to dispatch 4 vessels to the Nizovoi station² so that they and the horses he had purchased to be transported to Astrakhan. The officials at Astrakhan, however, sent two old rotten boats. Not wanting to endanger his men, but wishing to obey Your Highness, Ori chose 12 of the best craftsmen and ordered the rest to remain. He purchased 26 bales of raw silk and sent the 12 men and the silk to Moscow, where they have already demonstrated their abilities in producing fine silk cloth. He was afraid to send the horses on those boats, so he had them transported by land, via the mountains controlled by Shafkal (Shamkhal).³ Shafkal took a beautiful Arab horse for himself and another horse died on the way. The rest arrived in Astrakhan. After the death of Ori, the remaining masters returned to Persia.

74

Merkul Agazarev to Chancellor Golovkin(May 1712)⁴

His August Majesty during his trip to Poland in 1711 permitted us to live in Moscow and to engage in trade. My father and his family thus moved from Holland to Moscow. The transfer by land and sea caused us tremendous losses. We, therefore, petition Your Excellency to exempt us for a while from taxes and custom duties, so that we may revive our business. Thereafter our business will encourage the arrival of other mer-

¹*TsGADA*, Coll. 100 (1711-1714), file 1, ff. 459-460.

²Nizovoi was located on the Caspian Sea in northern Daghestan, between Derbent and Astrakhan. It is within the boundaries of present-day Makhachkala.

³Refers to the Shamkhal of Tarku (Tarqu).

⁴*TsGADA*, Coll. 100 (1712), file 1, p. 34.

chants, whose trade shall make a sizable contribution to His Majesty's treasury...Merkul Agazarev Kaklikov son of Gaspar and his family.¹

75

Claims against Israel Ori's Estate(20 April 1713)²

I, Melkum, the son of Ghazar, arrived in Moscow from the village of Goght'n on 20 April 1713. Twelve years ago, I and my three brothers T'arghuli, Baghdasar, and Haru[t']iwn, loaned the envoy³ Israel Ori money in return for a promissory note.⁴ All these years we have run around⁵ for the repayment of this debt.⁶ My brother, T'arghuli, obtained a writ⁷ against Ori in Düsseldorf, arrested him and managed to get half of the sum from him. Later, we returned with Ori to Persia. Our brother Ha-

¹In August of 1712 Merkul was granted free trade privileges, *ibid.*, ff. 41-42. In 1717 a number of Armenians belonging to the Julfa Trading Company wrote to the Tsar complaining that Merkul had borrowed money from them to start his business abroad and had not repaid it. Their letter contains the signature and seals of various grandees of Julfa, such as Set, Safraz, Elias, and Minas. Merkul refuted their allegations and produced his own witnesses including the Russian Metropolitan, Alexander, *TsGADA*, F-100 (1717), file 1, ff. 51-58. The document possesses an interesting date, based on a calendar used solely by the Armenian merchants in Persia and India. Their calendar began in the year 1616 (year 1) and followed the Persian months, with March 21 being the first day of the year.

²*AVPR*, Coll. 100 (1724), file G-1, f. 47. It is evident that Ori asked for financial help from the Armenian merchants in Europe, Russia, and Persia. In exchange he promised to use his position to perform services on their behalf. Following Ori's death a number of such claims appeared. In early May 1713, Minas Vardapet complained that Ori's clerks refused to give him Ori's account book, which contained all his income and expenditures. On 13 May the Russian government ordered that the said clerks be found and the book transferred to Minas. On 21 July of that year Peter the Great ordered that some 200 oak and walnut containers left by Ori in Kazan and Astrakhan be given by the commander of the region, Fedor Khrushchev, to Bogdan Khristoforov, the representative of Minas Vardapet, *TsGADA*, Coll. 100 (1713), file 2, f. 19.

³Text has the Perso-Turkish term *ilchi*.

⁴Text has the Arabo-Persian term *sanad*.

⁵Text has the Persian term *darbedar* (going from one place to another).

⁶Text has the Arabo-Persian term *talab*.

⁷Text has the Arabo-Persian term *'arz*.

rut'iwn died on the way. We used half of our cash¹ for our expenses² and spent more funds in Persia. Finally together with Ori we returned to Astrakhan. We had combined our merchandise with his and hoped to receive our debt in Russia. Ori's ship was damaged and much of his goods were spoiled, however. The state locked up most of those goods following Israel's death. After spending the last two years in Moscow, the Tsar decreed that my brother Baghdasar and I should receive 100 *tomans* worth of the damaged goods. My brother died in Moscow and I ordered that the goods be sold at the bazaar of Moscow. We have not been able to recover our losses and hope that this petition will enable us to gain access to the goods in storage...

76

Minas Vardapet's Petition to the Russian State
(20 November 1714)³

1

It is obvious that the late Israel Ori served His Highness loyally and well. His main effort was to see that the Armenians living near the Caspian and Astrakhan Seas come under the rule of His Majesty, the Tsar. The Persians made impossible demands on the Armenians and Ori feared that many would convert to Islam. Thus under the pretext of business, Ori traveled to Persia and convinced the Armenian kat'oghikos⁴ of the time to encourage the Armenians of Shemakhi and others living on the Caspian littoral to give their allegiance to and seek protection from Russia. He befriended the said patriarch and convinced him and a number of other Armenian religious leaders to travel to Moscow. When they arrived in Astrakhan, Ori became ill and died and they returned to their monastery.

2

I desire to continue the task began by Ori. Near Nizovoi there are two rivers, Bilbila and Mordova, which are separated by only three *versts*; another river, at a distance of one *verst* from Nizovoi, is surrounded by a

¹Text has the Persian term *naqd*.

²Text has the Persian term *karj*.

³*Ezov*, doc. 202 (written in Moscow).

⁴The kat'oghikos in question must have been Esayi Hasan-Jalalean of Gandzasar, for the kat'oghikos of Ėjmiatsin had no jurisdiction in Shemakhi.

wooded area void of men. Russian troops can easily enter that region. I request that His Majesty send a letter to the Shah asking that an Armenian monastery, similar to those built in other parts of Persia, be constructed in the land between the three rivers. I request that Russia supply the funds, so that the monastery will be constructed as a fortress. Russian troops will then be housed there and the Armenians of that region will be able to ask for protection.

3

It would be simple to send troops, for merchants are constantly traveling from Astrakhan to this area and there are no checkpoints. As for provisions, the region has numerous settlements where it could be purchased. The Armenian population, encouraged by the kat'oghikos and other religious leaders, will help as well. The Armenians of the region, as stated earlier by the kat'oghikos residing in Ararat,¹ are totally willing to become Russian subjects. The efforts of Ori and the sufferings of the Armenians under Persian rule are well documented [in the Department of Foreign Affairs].

4

To stop any suspicion on the part of the Persians, I humbly suggest that the Pope, the Holy Roman Emperor, and the Elector of the Palatinate also write to the Shah requesting the permission for the construction of such a monastery. They have written such requests in the past and thus the construction of a new site in the Shirvan Province will not give rise to suspicions.

5

To convince everyone that I am not an agent of the Russian State, I beg that an Armenian church be constructed in St. Petersburg. The construction of such a church was tentatively approved and thus all will know that I am not involved in anything else but am concerned solely in religious matters concerning the Armenian people.

6

If His Majesty finds the proposals beneficial, I am willing to carry His letters to the Armenian patriarchs and bear all the necessary labors. I am

¹See the letter of Kat'oghikos Hakob of Julfa, doc. 19.

the loyal servant of His Highness and await His orders via the State Vice Chancellor, Baron Peter Pavlovich Shafirov.¹

77

*Instructions of Peter the Great to Artemii Volynskii*²(1715)³

- 1) You are to travel to Persia as the envoy of His majesty and reside there. You shall have the necessary credentials to the Shah's Court.
- 2) You shall observe all the stations, towns, and settlements on land and by the Caspian Sea. You are to pay especial attention to the waterways. *Which large rivers empty into the Caspian. Is there a river that flows from India to the Caspian Sea?*⁴ Does the Shah possess any armed vessels or merchant ships on the Caspian? Are there any fortresses along the sea (especially around Gilan)? *Are there any mountains or impassable places that separate Gilan from other provinces along the Caspian?* Do this without attracting the attention of the Persians and keep an accurate journal.
- 3) When you arrive in Persia do not seek an immediate audience with the Shah. You should meet court officials and inquire or observe how other foreign envoys have conducted themselves or behave during their audiences. Does the Shah himself receive their credentials or are they handed to his officials. Are the credentials placed in the Shah's hands or are they placed at his feet—as was done by the Persian envoys to the court of His Majesty...It is important to make it clear to the Shah's ministers that Russia seeks friendly relations with Persia and that *Persians envoys shall be given the same treatment as that accorded to Russian representatives*. If a vizier asks for the official letter in the absence of the Shah, you shall refuse to give it to him. You will explain that it will be given only in the presence of the Shah, since you are the official envoy of His Majesty, the Tsar of Russia. You shall announce that His Majesty will send an august

¹In February 1716 Minas armed with a note from Peter the Great returned to Persia ostensibly to look for other items belonging to Ori., *TsGADA*, Coll. 100 (1716), file 3, f. 1.

²Artemii Petrovich Volynskii was the Russian ambassador to Persia (1715-1719). As a result of his efforts a trade treaty was signed with Shah Solṭān Hōsein in 1720 which permitted Russian merchants to trade freely in Persia.

³*TsGADA*, Russia's Relations with Persia (1715-1717), file 1, ff. 46-52.

⁴The passages in italic are added in Peter's own hand.

ambassador in the near future. His preoccupation with the war does not permit him to do so at present...

4) Without causing any suspicion you shall find out how many fortresses the Shah possesses in his provinces and their location. You shall find out the size of his army—the number of cavalry and infantry, artillery and other guns—and their general preparedness. Are there any Europeans serving in the Shah's army?

5) Find out about the Shah's relations with the Turks. Is the Shah planning a campaign against them? Are the Persians willing to find allies in a war against the Turks? You shall immediately inform His Majesty regarding this point. You shall impress upon the Persians that the Turks are the enemies of the Persian people, the Persian State, and are dangerous neighbors. You shall suggest that a friendship with Russia to the advantage of Persia.

6) You shall try to conclude a trade agreement that will permit Russian merchants to freely trade in Persia. This agreement shall be separate from the agreement made with the Armenians of Persia. Is there any way that our merchants can trade with India using Persian routes? What goods are in demand in India...?

7) The agreement should stress that Russian merchants must be allowed to travel freely and to purchase any goods they wish. Most importantly it should be stressed that Russian merchants must be free to purchase raw silk in Gilan without being harassed by the intrigues of the Armenian merchants.¹ You shall also impress upon the Shah to force the Armenians of Julfa to divert their entire trade in raw silk through Russia—for are routes are safer and our ports closer. The Armenians after all agreed at the time of Tsar Alexei that they would divert their trade from Turkey to Russia. *If words and demands do not work, the Shah's officials should be bribed to find a way to hinder their trade activities in Smyrna and Aleppo.*

8) Find out the number of Armenians in Persia and where they live. Who are the members of the gentry and who are merchants. What are their feelings toward Russia and His Majesty? Are there any other Christians or non-Muslims in Persia. What are their economic conditions?

9) Prince Alexander Cherkasov is planning to build a fort on the Caspian. *This is at the request of the khan of Khiva to secure trade on the Baldeh River.* Explain to the Persians that this is not a hostile act, but primarily

¹The Shah's response (in 1717) was favorable, *TsGADA* (1718), Coll. 77, file 1, f. 8.

to facilitate trade with Khiva and Bukhara. Tribesmen attack many of the caravans.

You are also instructed to inform His Majesty which governments have envoys in Persia. Have any of them succeeded in making agreements? Are the Jesuits permitted to have their own churches? Do they have missions to convert local inhabitants? If so can Russians build churches in Persia and send their own priests there?¹

10) *The Nizovoi and Derbent piers are very small and boats have to be dragged on the sand. We need a place which is deeper and where larger boats can maneuver easily. His Highness the Shah should permit us to locate another place to build a station.*²

11) *Anything else, which may benefit our state and is not mentioned above, should be considered. However, such items should be approached carefully and secretly as not to ruin our chances.*

Queen Catherine of Imeret'i has petitioned His Majesty regarding her nephew, Prince Wakhtang Leonovich who is a prisoner of the Shah. He is under pressure to convert to Islam but has refused. They planned to use his wife and children... You are to secretly ascertain the whereabouts of the jail in Isfahan. At the appropriate moment you shall inform the Shah that members of the Greek Orthodox Church should not be molested and should be treated like other Christians in Persia, which according to the law of Islam should be free to practice their religion. The prince should be freed from imprisonment—such an act will constitute a friendship between our two states.³

¹The Persian reply (in 1717) to this request was a definite “no,” *TsGADA*, Coll. 77 (1718), file 1, f. 8.

²The Persian response (in 1717) stated that the Persian governors of the region shall improve the docks and shall give Russians every possible aid and attention, *ibid.*, f. 9.

³In July 1717 Volynskii presented these and other points, totaling 21, to the Persian government. In addition to items listed above, Volynskii complained about the behavior of the Shamkhal of Tarku, who took Russians and Armenians as hostage and demanded payment for their release. He also complained about the behavior of the khan of Shirvan and his officials who took additional sums for transport and demanded the best merchandise as bribes. He gave names and dates of numerous infractions committed by Muslim officials in charge of the Caspian coast. Most of the complaints focused on Shemakhi, where Russian merchants were harassed and robbed. Other complaints were about the treatment of Russian merchants in Gilan. The Shah responded (a few months later), promising to correct the problems, *TsGADA*, Coll. 77 (1718), file 1, ff. 9-14. The

78

Statute Concerning Armenian Merchants(22 May 1716)¹

Armenian merchants are not abiding by the trade agreement. They are selling foreign goods from kiosks and homes and complaints have been filed by foreign merchants as well as our own. The Armenian Trade Company will be informed that such activities are against the agreement. Armenian merchants cannot sell foreign goods from shops or homes and must sell and transport their wares according to the trade agreement.

79

Kat'oghikos Astuatsatur² to the Armenians of Russia(23 July 1716)³

From the servant of Jesus Christ, Astuatsatur, Kat'oghikos of All Armenians, who resides at the Holy See of Ējmiatsin...

Our prayers are with you...Our son, the faithful servant of our Holy See, Minas Vardapet, presented himself to us and bowed before the altar of our Mother Church. He pledged allegiance to us. We welcomed him with great joy and presented him with a certificate⁴ as a symbol of our love and blessing...

80

Kat'oghikos Esayi to Peter the Great(10 August 1716)⁵

To the Sovereign of All Russia from the Slave of Christ, Esayi of the Land of Aghuank' and Armenia, Patriarch of the Great Monastery of Gandzasar. We constantly pray that God grant You, Your Senators, and Your army long life enabling us Christians to rejoice. Amen.

conditions did not improve, however, and in 1722, Peter, citing the murder of Russian merchants in Shemakhi, invaded Persia.

¹PSZR, IV, doc. 3022.

²Kat'oghikos at Ējmiatsin from 1715 to 1725, see biographical notes.

³AVPR, Coll. 100 (1740), file 10, f. 14.

⁴Text has *vkahyakan* (testimonial or certificate).

⁵TsGADA, Coll. 100 (1716), file 3, f. 62, Russian version in *Ezov*, doc. 206, dated 13 August in error.

Your envoy Israel Ori was here in Armenia. He met us and told us of Your great power and Your kind intentions toward us. We were overjoyed and thanked the Lord. My bishops and I believed Ori's promises. Ori took me to Astrakhan and was planning to escort me to Your presence. I had prepared appropriate gifts for Your Majesty. God punished us for our sins, however. Ori died in Astrakhan and there was no one else suitable to carry on his mission. I was, therefore, forced to return to our land.

Minas Vardapet, Your envoy, who has been here, is of our faith and trusted by us. He delivered Your Majesty's message. My people and I are happy to serve to the best of our abilities the moment You are ready to start military action. I request that you dispatch a trusted messenger at that time so that we can prepare ourselves and send men to guide Your troops. We have entrusted our brother Minas, with further details, which he shall present to Your Highness in person. We have elevated Minas to the rank of archbishop and the Armenians in Russia are under his spiritual authority. He shall thus be loyal to You and to us and will keep our mutual plans secret. I await a swift reply.¹

81

Kat'oghikos Esayi to Peter the Great

(12 August 1716)²

Israel Ori came here and told us such wonderful things about Your Majesty that our people developed great love for Your Highness. I was instructed to travel to Moscow and to present our gifts and our submission to the will of Your Majesty. Unfortunately, Ori died upon our arrival in Astrakhan. Not knowing anyone, we decided to return to our homeland. Some time later Minas Vardapet arrived in our domain and also informed us of Your Majesty's benevolence toward the Armenian people. We are very happy and wish to place ourselves under the wings of Your Highness. If you agree to protect and to help us, all of us, meliks and peasants,

¹Vardapet Minas, who had gone to eastern Armenia in 1716 (see doc. 80), delivered the letter on 14 March 1717. It was translated into Russian by Bogdan Khristoforov.

²*AVPR*, Coll. 100 (1740), file 10, f. 12.

young and old are prepared to serve you. We shall write in more detail later, for now we orally informed Minas Vardapet of our plans.¹

82

Minas Vardapet to Peter the Great(15 September 1716)²

Obeying Your Imperial command, I left St. Petersburg with a secret mission to Persia. After concluding my mission, I returned and reached Shemakhi. Just then a messenger from Your envoy to the Shah Persia arrived at the court of the khan of Shemakhi. I met him and planned to travel with him to meet Your envoy at Nizovoi. I hoped that he would facilitate my return trip to Russia. But the late Ori's secretary, Beauregard, who resides in Shemakhi, stopped my journey. He claims that he served Ori for four years and demands the payments of 220 rubles per annum. He told the khan of Shemakhi that I had inherited Ori's property, more than 30,000 rubles in cash and merchandise, and was responsible for his salary. I am thus detained and cannot leave Shemakhi. I have asked Your envoy to help me but he refuses. Had I not relied on him I would have found a way to escape by sea to Russia. As it is I am now under guard for two months. There are others here who assist Beauregard, while it is imperative for me to come to Russia and inform Your Majesty of the secret communications. I implore Your Highness to instruct them to release me...

Following the death of Ori, numerous persons have come forth and presented me with various false demands claiming that he owed them money or goods. They assume that I came here on my own. They do not realize that Your Highness sent me. If they saw the original order they would release me, for they fear Your Majesty's might in this region...

¹This letter was sent two days after the first letter (doc. 80). There were those among the Armenians who because of fear or greed, were willing to betray their own. Esayi feared that the first letter might be stolen, intercepted, or lost. This fear is reiterated in doc. 95.

²*TsGADA*, Coll. 100 (1716), file 3, ff. 7-8. Written from Shemakhi, Russian translation in Ezov, doc. 208. The letter was translated and sent to St. Petersburg from Moscow by Peter Pavlovich Shafirov on 27 December.

83

From Volynskii's Journal
(1716-1717)¹

The chief minister (*'etemād al-dowle*) made the envoy wait for over half an hour. The Persian stated that he was praying² and then he was getting dressed. After coffee, the minister was ready to talk business. He excused everyone, except a clerk, a scribe, and five young imbeciles. The first had a saber, the second a bow, the third a case for arrows, the fourth a mace and shield, the fifth stood near the minister and held an arquebus. They did not move during the entire discussion, but remained frozen as wooden dolls.

The minister inquired whether it was true that the Tsar had been to Holland. The envoy replied it was true. The minister then said that he had heard that the Tsar had gone to Holland to ask the Dutch to mediate a peace with Russia and Sweden. The envoy dismissed the rumor as totally false. He added that first of all it was unheard of for a monarch of a large empire to personally travel to another state, a republic no less, to ask for help. He would have sent an ambassador. Secondly, almost half of Sweden was already under Russian rule.

The envoy asked if the Dutch representative had spread the rumor. The chief minister swore on the Shah's head that it was not the Dutchman, but an Armenian from Julfa. The envoy replied that there were many men who did not wish friendly relations between the Tsar and the Shah. Persia should not trust rumors spread by Armenians who are only interested in their own financial gain and who are plotting to abandon Persian citizenship. The Armenians have complained that they are persecuted and that their wives and children are forcibly converted to Islam. The envoy added that all Christians in Persia, including Europeans, except for the Russian representative, are not to be trusted...As for the Turks, their animosity towards Persia is obvious.

¹*TsGADA*, Coll. 77 (1716-1718), file 3, ff. 214-217. The diary was transcribed as a report.

²Text has *namas* (from *namāz*, to pray).

84

Decree of Peter the Great(28 January 1717)¹

To the Senate, Governors, Vice-Governors, Commandants...and all military and civilian officials, inspectors, and customs officials. Be it known that during Our trip to Holland, the Armenian Peter (Petros) Abro notified Us that he and his two brothers Abram (Abraham) and Stefan (Step'an), all residents of Smyrna, have large trading companies in India, Persia, Turkey, and Europe. They trade mainly in silk and other Persian and Eastern goods. They asked Us permission to conduct travel to Persia via Our domain, using Astrakhan, Yaroslavl, Archangel, Moscow, and St. Petersburg. They asked permission to conduct trade in these cities, where they would pay the necessary custom duties. They request that they be granted the same privileges as the Armenians of Julfa. In order to expand trade in Our lands, We have decided to grant his request...They are to travel and trade freely in our cities and be protected so that other Armenians and merchants from other nationalities will also be attracted to trade in State...written, signed, and sealed in Amsterdam, the 28th day of January, 1717, the 35th year of our reign.²

85

Minas Vardapet's Report(14 March 1717)³

Minas left St. Petersburg and via Moscow traveled to Persia. He met the Supreme Patriarch of the Armenians, Astuatsatur in the great monastery of Ējmiatsin, which is six days ride from Shemakhi, on 15 July 1716. He related the secret message of His Majesty relayed to him by Vice Chancellor Peter Pavlovich Shafirov. The Patriarch was overjoyed and promised to be of help in future endeavors. He is, however, afraid of the Persian Shah and will wait until Vardapet Minas or another envoy will

¹SAAN, I, 158-160.

²The date here refers to 1682, when the two brothers reigned under the regency of Sophia.

³TsGADA, Coll. 100 (1716) file 3, ff. 21-25, transcribed from Minas' journal by secretaries of the Moscow chancellery, Michael Shafirov and Michael Larionov.

assure him that the Russian troops have entered Armenia. He will then do all in his power to assist them. Although Minas asked for a written confirmation, the Patriarch refused citing the secret nature of their conversation. He added that he did not trust the Persian and some of the Armenians as well. He was, however, willing to give him a letter, which stated that they had met. The said letter is in Minas' possession.

After leaving Ējmiatsin, Minas visited the other Armenian Patriarch, Esayi, in the Monastery of Gandzasar. When the latter heard Minas' message, he replied that he was ready to serve His Majesty and help in anyway he could. He gave Minas a letter, which is on file at the department of Foreign Affairs.¹ He elevated him to the rank of archbishop and bade him farewell. Minas asked the Patriarch to send a priest with him to Shemakhi to meet our representative, Volynskii. The patriarch did so and sent a high-ranking cleric.

Upon arrival Minas was questioned by Volynskii, who demanded to know what was his mission and what rank did he obtain in Persia. Minas refused to give details and replied that he shall inform Moscow about his mission. As to the rank, the Armenian Patriarch gave it. After that Volynskii refused to meet with him or with the representative of Esayi...

Minas informs us that from the Nizovoi station to Shemakhi is four days travel by horse and eight by camel. From Shemakhi to Gandzasar is six days by horse, while by camels it is eight days. There are villages have between 50 and 100 households and produce grain. There are some 900 villages in the region where Gandzasar is located. They are large and have between 100 and 400, and sometimes more, houses each. From Gandzasar to Ējmiatsin is five days by horse. They say that there are many more villages in the region surrounding Ējmiatsin, but he cannot ascertain the truth of this statement.

Minas adds that while in Shemakhi, Ganja, and Erevan, many Persians told him that they have heard that a Russian army led by Prince Alexander Bekovich Cherkasov is on the move into Transcaucasia. He did not observe any defensive measures, however. Minas also observed that in the cities of Derbent, Shemakhi, Ganja, Tiflis, Erevan, Tabriz, and Ardebil there are numerous Georgians,² who have become Muslims. He adds that they told him that if the Russian troops arrive they would gladly revert to their Christian faith and become subjects of His Majesty.

¹See docs. 86-87.

²Text has *Imeret'ians*.

In addition, as far as Minas could observe, the above cities are fortified poorly, have few troops and no much artillery.

The Armenian population under the jurisdiction of both patriarchs number about 200,000. They include both peasants and merchants. In case of war with Persia, Minas asserts, they shall join the Russians, for the Persians have placed a heavy burden on them.

Patriarch Esayi will definitely come to our side and the Armenians in his domain follow his orders without question.

The other patriarch, despite his verbal assurances, is not as reliable as Esayi. He fears the Shah more than Esayi...

86

Kat'oghikos Esayi to Vardapet Minas(24 September 1718)¹

We inform you that all your letters addressed to us have arrived safely and have given us great pleasure. It is our hope that our people will be liberated from tyranny. You, with your tireless efforts, you shall make our dream come true. To experience in our lifetime what our people, young and old, desire the most, their freedom. We are preparing and are ready for the day of liberation.

The situation in Persia is gloomy. Enemies are threatening it from all directions. The Qandaharis (Afghans), led by 5 or 6 commanders² have attacked the interior and have robbed caravans. The Uzbeks have invaded and devastated the Mashhad region. Rebels from Kurdistan have looted the region of Ararat and have caused damage in Erevan and Salmas. In our own province of Shirvan, we have had raids in the districts of Karabagh, Georgia,³ and Aghuank'.⁴ The Persian population is in a great confusion. The Shah has left Isfahan with his army for Qazvin. He plans to march on Mashhad, from where he hopes to send a detachment to Qandahar to restore order. Wakhtang, the commander of the army⁵ in Tabriz has been removed from his post. Some say that he has been killed.

¹Ezov, doc. 210.

²Text has *serdars* (*sardār*).

³Eastern Georgia, in the region of Ingushetia.

⁴In this context, Eastern Caucasus or most of present-day Republic of Azerbaijan.

⁵Text has *sepahsalar*.

We do not have all the details at this time. Aivaz¹ shall inform you of all the details, which have transpired here. We had wished to write a more detailed letter, but feared of the consequences in case it fell into the wrong hands. We, therefore, have entrusted Aivaz to present you with the details. We live among snakes and some Armenians cannot be trusted. There are those among us who are our enemies. There are spies among us, and if our secret is discovered it shall mean our end. I implore you to keep our correspondence secret. Our enemies are numerous and everywhere. You are well aware that among the Julfans there are many insidious individuals. In addition, there are spies among the Ējmiatsin citizens who live in Shemakhi. Do not forget that even among the Armenians of Astrakhan, there may be those who are still subjects of Persia and may betray us... Written on September 24 in year 1167 of the Armenian calendar.

87

Kat'oghikos Esayi to Peter the Great
(25 September 1718)²

To the Most Supreme Emperor and Monarch, Beloved of God, Most August Caesar, Eternally embraced by Christ, Holder of the Scepter of Justice, Ruler over Land and Sea, Crowned by the Grace of God, Protector of Christendom, Our Most August Sovereign, Tsar Peter Alekseevich, Autocrat of All Russia.

From, Esayi, the submissive slave of Jesus Christ, Kat'oghikos of All of Aghuank' and parts of Armenia, successor of the Holy Apostle Eghishē and St. Gregory the Illuminator, and the Patriarch of the Holy See of Gandzasar...³

Our Armenian subjects and we bow before you and wish to put us under your rule. We are suffering under the tyrannical rule of the barbarians. Just as the emperors Constantine and Theodosius spread the rule of

¹Aivaz Avramov, the envoy of Kat'oghikos Esayi to Russia, converted to Russian Orthodoxy and took the name of Semen Romanov. He was recruited into the Russian army by Apraksin and died in the Russian campaign in Gilan.

²AVPR, Coll. 100 (1740), file 10, f. 11, Russian translation in *Ezov* doc. 211.

³The Hasan-Jalalean house had claims to the leadership of Ējmiatsin since the 15th century, see commentary.

Christ, protected Christians, and destroyed the enemies of Christ, we wish that Your Majesty pity us miserable and wretched Christians and place us under Your protection. We are ready to serve you in every way possible, as indicated by the messages carried by the Armenian Archbishop, Minas. The existence of enemies and spies has forced us to operate secretly. Any questions or concerns may be addressed to our beloved and trusted vardapet.¹

May your reign be everlasting. Amen.

Written on September 25 in the Armenian year 1167.

Seals of the Kat'oghikos.²

88

Petition of Julfa Armenians

(March 1719)³

In May of last year by the order of Your Majesty, the Department of Foreign Affairs issued travel permits for merchants of the Julfa Trading Company and our companions to leave Moscow for Astrakhan. Among them was Hovakim, an Armenian bishop.⁴ After our departure the same department sent an order, dated 3 June, to the governor of Kazan, the boyar Peter Samoilovich Saltanov. It stated that Hovakim did not have a travel permit. He had joined the Armenian merchants to secretly enter

¹On 5 April 1719, Minas submitted a 13-point declaration to Peter in which he reiterated the loyalty and readiness of Esayi and the Armenians of Karabagh. He stated that Aivaz had provided him with written and verbal assurances that the Armenians would join the Russian troops and fight against the Muslims, *Ezov*, doc. 212 (written in St. Petersburg).

²The large seal has a picture of Christ circled by the words, "Esayi, the Kat'oghikos of Aghuank' in the Holy See of Gandzasar. The small seal reads Esayi Kat'oghikos.

³*TsGADA*, Coll. 100 (1719), file 1, f. 42.

⁴Bishop Hovakim of Julfa was the envoy of Ējmiatsin. He was sent by Kat'oghikos Aghek'sandr to Russia in 1710. He visited Amsterdam, Livonia, and Venice. He was a prisoner in Rome for five years. On 4 November 1716 he escaped to Livonia and Amsterdam and reached Moscow in the winter of 1717. Hovakim did not accept Minas as the spiritual representative of the Armenians in Russia. He viewed his appointment by Esayi invalid, since only the kat'oghikos at Ējmiatsin had that authority. Minas, citing the letter of Esayi (see doc. 86) accused him of being a spy for the Persians and had him arrested in Kazan, as demonstrated below. He died in the Kazan jail on 30 October 1720.

Persia. All groups of Armenian merchants were to be searched and Hovakim was to be detained in Kazan, Astrakhan, or at the Terek River crossing. Every effort was to be made to stop him from crossing the border. The order also stated that any Armenian merchants accompanying Hovakim were to be detained as well.

The order reached Kazan during our sojourn there and we were detained for three weeks. Our merchandise, our retainers, and we were stranded here and we were forced to spend 300 rubles on food and lodgings. Finally the lieutenant governor, Mr. Kudriavtsov, permitted our merchandise to leave by three boats for Astrakhan. Hovakim, and two of our Armenian companions, however, were detained in Kazan. He also sent a letter to Astrakhan informing the local commander to detain our goods and us. We sent a petition to Moscow explaining that we had obtained the necessary travel permits. Finally an order arrived to permit our goods and us to proceed, but Hovakim was kept in Kazan under guard. We do not know what crime has he committed or who spread evil words against him. The priest is all alone and starving. In the meantime, the delay to disembark at Astrakhan caused the loss of one boat with all its men and merchandise. A second boat broke killing men and damaging the goods. We request that Hovakim be permitted to return to Moscow, where he can be looked after by our colleagues until the Department of Foreign Affairs decides his fate.

Safar, son of Basil; Ignatii Frantsov; Zakar, son of Aghapiri
Copied by scribe Kiril Merkulov

89

Petition of Armenians of Cherkassk
(16 May 1719)¹

Mighty Tsar, we the undersigned wish to travel from Moscow via Tsaritsyn on the Don to Cherkassk with our merchandise. We need Your Majesty's permission and beg You to instruct the Department of Foreign Affairs to issue our travel permit. Your slaves, residents of Cherkassk, the Armenians Aidina Arakelov and Yan Narkov. Our servants, an Armenian and a Don Cossack accompany us.

¹*TsGADA*, Coll. 100 (1719), file 1, f. 85.

90

Decree Regarding Armenian Merchants(6 June 1719)¹

His Supreme Majesty in 1711 had decreed that merchants belonging to the Armenian Trading Company had the right to bring unlimited quantities of raw silk to Russia from Persia. The Armenians could not transport their silk to the German lands via Turkey. They could not sell raw silk to foreigners visiting Persia or to transport silk for foreigners via Russia. For the Shah had forbidden foreigners to sell or transport silk [via Russia] and the Armenians paid a smaller duty than others did. They thus had privileges not granted to other merchants in Russia. The Armenians, however, have not abided by the law and have exported raw silk through Turkey. His Majesty has therefore decreed that Armenians be subject to the same duties as other merchants. The said decree published in St. Petersburg has been sent to all provincial governors.

91

Statute Governing the Baptism and Marriage of Armenians(3 July 1719)²

At the request of the Armenian Archbishop Minas, Russian priests are to follow proper rites during baptism and marriage ceremonies performed for Armenians. No one should do otherwise.³

¹PZSR, V, doc. 3385.

²*Ibid.*, doc. 3400.

³The decree does not indicate if baptisms and wedding had to be performed according to the rite of the Armenian Church. There were no Armenian churches in Russia except in Astrakhan. It is possible that Minas wanted the Russian priests to receive instructions on the Armenian ceremonies.

92

Decree Concerning Armenian Merchants

(20 July 1720)¹

His Majesty has decreed that Armenians transporting goods via Russia from Persia to Europe and from Europe to Persia be taxed according to previous agreements. However, merchandise sold in Russia, be it from Persia or Europe, shall be taxed at the same rate as collected from other merchants.

93

State Commerce College to the Russian Resident² in Constantinople³

(27 February 1721)⁴

1-You are to observe all merchandise sold in Constantinople, especially those manufactured in Russia. Make note of all goods that are exported from Turkey to Russia and goods, which are exported to Europe via Russia. 2-You are to record all merchants trading in Turkish ports who deal in Russian goods. 3-You are especially to note those merchants who deal in Persian goods. Seek those from Smyrna, Aleppo, Alexandria and the Danube region and explain to them that they can transport their goods, and especially raw silk cheaper, safer, and pay a lesser duty. They can also bring European goods through Russia into Persia.

Signed by Peter Tolstoi, Ivan Paul Bacon, Jacob Güvit, Peter Gordon, Dieferier Willers, André Cassel, Semen Kireev.⁵

94

Kat'oghikos Esayi to Peter the Great

(1 April 1721)⁶

Like Your Majesty we are the children of Christ. We implore that you help remove our burden. It is twenty-two years that Kat'oghikos Nahapet

¹PSZR, VI, doc. 3618.

²The Russian resident was Ivan I. Nepliev

³Text has *Tsargrad*.

⁴AVPR, Russia's Relations with Turkey (1721), file 7, f. 91.

⁵A number of other signatures are not legible.

⁶AVPR, Coll. 100 (1740), file 10, f. 10.

and his archbishops informed Israel Ori of our terrible conditions. Ori did not manage to bring all the details to Your Majesty. Evil people caused his death. Minas Vardapet, however, is well aware of the problems in our land...Ori was planning to use our land as a center of silk production. He wished to bring master weavers to Russia. His work is left undone...We count the days for Your arrival. If Your Majesty comes to our land, You shall be remembered like the great Constantine, Theodosius, and Trdat. We have plenty of provisions, more than any other region in these parts. Our meliks and all of our population are ready to join and to serve Your Highness. Please hurry. There are many snakes among us, who wish us harm. This is the right time, for they (the Persians) are at war...We ask that Your Majesty issue an official writ to Minas Vardapet, who is in Astrakhan. He has numerous enemies and needs Your support...

95

Kat'oghikos Esayi to Minas Vardapet(5 April 1721)¹

From the servant of Christ...to Minas, Prelate of Moscow and Astrakhan. We thank you for your gift and we have received your letters. I am unaware of the details of the late Ori's mission and hope to learn it from you. I cannot write everything for vipers surround me. Armenians who have learned nothing but spying will betray me. I am especially concerned that my correspondence might fall into the hands of those in Ējmiatsin or Shemakhi. I am, therefore, writing a short note. Please write a detailed letter and dispatch it with a trusted man so that it may not fall into the wrong hands...The Lesghians have attacked Shemakhi and the Afghans have rebelled in Qandahar...Once more thank you for your generous gifts.²

¹*AVPR*, Coll. 100 (1740), file 10, f. 9.

²Esayi once more refers to his enemies, especially those in Ējmiatsin. The Holy See of Gandzasar had obviously much better relations with Russia than that of Ējmiatsin. The actions of the Karabagh meliks and the proximity of Russian troops soon gave Gandzasar an even greater connection with Russia throughout the first half of the 18th century. Ējmiatsin, however, gains its supremacy vis-à-vis Russia during the second half of the 18th century.

96

Peter the Great to Wakhtang VI¹(2 July 1722)²

We received your letter, which was delivered by Prince Boris Turkistanov.³ We have arrived in Astrakhan and are sending the prince to you with the hope that by the time he arrives there we should have reached the Persian coastline [Caspian]. We expect you to honor your promise and to join Us with your army in the defense of Christianity and to rid your people from Turkish rule.⁴

97

Ivan Kikin to Count Peter Tolstoi⁵(9 August 1722)⁶

By the order of His Imperial Majesty, the Armenian priest Minas Vardapet accompanied by fourteen Armenians left Astrakhan with the Russian command for Persia. They are to assist our troops. They include the following individuals:

Avet Torosov, Kinos Martinov, Khechum Mironov, Ivan Semenov, Pavel Avamov, Pavel Muradov, Eremai Gumrov, Petros di Sarkis Gilanents, Ivan Avramov, Iakov Grigor'ev, Kivars Sergyev, Stepan Iakovlev, Martin Ivanisov, and Peter Kasparov.

¹Wakhtang VI was reinstated by the Persians as king of K'art'li in 1719 and ruled under the title of Hosein Qoli Khan until 1723.

²*TsGADA*, Russia's Relations with Georgia, Coll. 110, file 15, ff. 485-486.

³Boris Turkestanishvili was a Georgian in the service of Russia. He had the rank of lieutenant colonel and served as the envoy of Peter to Wakhtang. He was an active participant in the plan to create a Georgian-Armenian-Russian alliance against the Muslims. He died in 1735.

⁴Peter also ordered Wakhtang to attack the Lesghians, whose lands lay between Georgia and the Caspian coast.

⁵Count Peter Andreevich Tolstoi (1645-1729). Tolstoi was the Russian envoy to the Ottoman Empire (1701-1714). Upon his return he became a senator and the head of the Department of Commerce. In 1718 he was named chief of the Privy Council.

⁶*AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Persia (1722), file 8, f. 7.

98

Wakhtang VI to Peter the Great(15 August 1722)¹

Prince Turkistanov delivered your letter. Our heart and soul was warmed by Your Majesty's presence in the region and we, together with all the Christians here, pray for Your health. The day we received Your orders, we also received a message from the Shah, which appointed me as the *sepahsalar*² of the province of Azerbaijan³ and ordered me to attack the Lesghians. God willing I shall arrive with my army in Ganja on 20 August. I shall gather the Armenian and Persian men there and attack the Lesghians. I shall then await Your Majesty's instructions.

99

Citizens of Baku to Peter the Great(22 August 1722)⁴

We know your friendly relations with the Shah. We welcome Your Majesty to Shirvan and hope that You shall punish those who have rebelled against the Shah. Your declaration as a friend and brother of the Shah is known to us and we are prepared to join You against the enemies of the Shah. We have, for a year, resisted the enemies of the Shah who have tried to fool us into surrendering our city. We have fortified the town and are awaiting Your arrival.

Signed and sealed by Moḥammad Qolī and twelve notable citizens.

¹Turkestanov arrived in Tiflis in early August. Wakhtang's letter to Peter was delivered on 19 September, *TsGADA*, Russia's Relations with Georgia, Coll. 110, file 15, ff. 486-487.

²Persian term for the chief of the army.

³The Safavid *beglerbegi* of Azerbaijan had jurisdiction over Erevan, Ganja, and Karabagh.

⁴*AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Turkey (1723), file 2, ff. 21-22.

100

Petros, Son of Sargis,¹ to Minas Vardapet
(September 1722)

21. After Maḥmud had captured Julfa,² the inhabitants did not come to pay homage to him for four days. He sent men to summon the *kalantar* (mayor) and elders of Julfa; the Julfa'is appeared before Maḥmud. Maḥmud's Chief Justice, whose name was Muḥammad Nishan, came to the Julfa Armenians and said: "It is now four days since we came here. Why did you not come to kiss Maḥmud Khan's feet? He is angry with you, and has ordered us to carry out a *qatl-e 'ām* (general massacre) of the Armenians." The Armenians replied: "It is Maḥmud's will, but we are not guilty of anything deserving massacre. How can you stain yourself with our innocent blood? We are the loyal subjects of our Shah, and half of our fellow-inhabitants of Julfa, men, women and children, have been sent to the city of Isfahan. Had we come to pay homage at Maḥmud's feet without a summons from you, and had this action come to the knowledge of the Shah or his commanders, they would assuredly put to death half of our people of Julfa who are in the city. This is the

¹Petros di Sargis Gilanents' was a Persian Armenian merchant who carried goods to Astrakhan and Moscow (a document dated 1707 mentions him as Peter Sergeev, *TsGADA*, Coll. 100 (1707), file 2, f. 110. He settled in or visited Astrakhan frequently. In the summer of 1722 Minas Vardapet recruited him to go Persia for the purpose of gathering and transmitting information. One of his informants Hovsēp' (Joseph) Apisalaimean, a Georgian Armenian who served as an interpreter for the French consul in Isfahan, kept him apprised of the situation in Isfahan. Petros began to collect data from various sources from September 1722 until September 1723. He sent the material to Minas, with a Russian translation for General Levashov, the commander of the Russian troops in Gilan. Realizing the precarious position of the Armenians after the fall of Isfahan, Petros, in late 1722, formed an Armenian unit from the men who had accompanied him from Russia as well as local volunteers. The unit, between 50 to 100 men, was maintained at his expense. It joined the Russian troops in Gilan. He was killed in action in 1724. His numbered reports appear in *The Chronicle of Petros Di Sarkis Gilanentz* (Lisbon, 1959), translated from the Armenian and Russian texts by G. O. Minasian.

²The Armenians of Julfa were ready to aid the Persians, but they were disarmed and left to their own fate. Despite this the Armenians put up a good resistance, L. Lockhart, *The Fall of the Ṣafavī Dynasty and the Afghan Occupation of Persia* (Cambridge, 1958), p. 151.

reason why we did not come to you of our own accord. We now await Maḥmud's pleasure."

After the Armenians had thus replied, their mediator, who was a *mufti* (Muslim judge) pleaded very earnestly to Maḥmud Khan on their behalf. Maḥmud replied: "I shall not shed the Armenians' blood, but I shall fine them 120,000 *tomans*. Let them consider the matter promptly and pay." He thereupon dismissed the Armenians. After taking their leave, the Armenians went to Muḥammad Nishan. They cast themselves at his feet, crying out and pleading with him, saying: "Where can we raise so much money to give you? Come, we shall give you the keys of our homes. Go and enter them, if you wish to do so. Let all that is in them be yours."

After much pleading by the Armenians, Muḥammad Nishan went to Maḥmud Khan; on returning, he talked to the Armenians for a long while, and finally made them agree to pay 70,000 *tomans*.¹ The Armenians gave Maḥmud a promissory note for this sum, and a bailiff was appointed and was sent to collect the 70,000 *tomans* from Julfa. Maḥmud's bailiff and the *kalantar* and elders of Julfa went around from house to house, collecting all the jewelry, pearls, gold, silver and *zarbaf* (*zarbaft*, brocade with golden thread); these were all brought to one spot and piled up. The *zarbaf* and the silver were valued at one-quarter of their real price. The jewels, pearls and gold were weighed with a barley-weighting scale. Each *metqāl* (71.6 grains) was calculated as being worth 1,000 *dinars* (a *toman* was 10,000 *dinars*), that is to say, valuables that were worth more than 20,000 *tomans* were regarded as being worth only 9,000 *tomans*. The Armenians thereupon declared: "We cannot pay more than that at present; as to the rest, we shall consider it when the roads to Isfahan are opened." The Afghans took away 62 girls² from Julfa; after keeping them for some time, they returned 50 of them, retaining the remaining 12 as wives for themselves.

Furthermore, they seized 5,000 long satin *qabās* (coats) much *qotni* (atlas), broad cloth, and woolen shawls, and gave them to their soldiers to wear. They also seized numbers of quilts, pillows and mattresses, all

¹Since the *toman* was worth close to 2.5 English pounds, the sum required was enormous.

²A contemporary European source records that 50 girls were taken. Maḥmud kept the best looking and gave the rest to his councilors. They add, however, that the girls were so terrified and unhappy that the Afghans sent many of them back home, T. J. Krusinski, *The History of the Late Revolutions in Persia* (London, 1740), II, 49-50.

made of *zarbafts*, *qalamkars* (batik), *qotnis*, and satin. Neither the *qabas* nor the *qotnis* were valued or regarded as forming part of the indemnity. In addition to these things, they stole ornaments from the churches and entered, plundered and destroyed some houses.¹

65. After capturing Isfahan, Maḥmud levied fines on the Armenians, Franks (Europeans), Turks (Armenian term for Muslims), and Multanis (Indians), and there is a detailed account of all that he extorted from them in the form of money, presents, *kal'at* (robes of honor) and fines on various pretexts...He fixed an indemnity of 70,000 *tomans* in cash on the Julfa Armenians, of which he received 17,000 (in cash) and a promissory note for the remainder. Because they were unable to pay the whole 70,000 *tomans* within the specified time, he beheaded the following four persons: Khachik, the *kalantar* (mayor), Sarhat, the son of Grigor Khaldarentz, Manook Samboori, and Sarhat, the son of Akopjan Kolkapaentz. Furthermore, they wanted to kill Akopjan, the son of Hovsep Khaldarentz, but here the bailiff was of great assistance and saved his life, though it cost him a large sum of money. So the Armenians were not left in peace until they had paid the 53,000 *tomans* in full. They were thereby reduced to great straits, and many of them became destitute.²

84/85. On the 19th/30th May Maḥmud arrested the Armenians, demanding the payment of the rest of the money due. They replied: "We gave you all that we had; nothing is left for us. Where can we get the money to pay you when we do not even have enough to buy our daily bread? We did have a piece of bread before, but you have deprived us even of that, and now, once again, you do not leave us alone." Maḥmud replied: "Why should an Armenian have money. Our soldiers, who are fighting men, must have the money. Armenians must be farmers and do the ploughing and sowing. The money, houses and furniture that you possess are not necessary for you."³

On the 1st/12th March, Maḥmud began to levy *māl* and *ḡehāt* (land and property taxes) on the Armenians in Julfa and on those in villages...demanding from them payment for expenses at the same rate which they had previously paid to the ex-Shah.⁴

¹*Gilanentz*, pp. 11-13.

²*Ibid.*, pp. 35-36.

³*Ibid.*, p. 42.

⁴*Ibid.*

101

Prince Turkistanov to Peter the Great(19 September to 30 December 1722)¹

Prior to my arrival in Tiflis, The pasha of Erzerum sent an envoy to Wakhtang stating that the Turkish [Ottoman] Sultan was planning to start a war with the Shah of Persia and take the Erevan province. The Turkish army was already on the move and the pasha asked Wakhtang to join him with his army and attack the Persians. In return Wakhtang would rule over all the Christians in Turkey and Georgia. Wakhtang replied that he could not betray the Shah of Persia.²

Wakhtang asked me if Your Majesty would permit him to act as an intermediary between Russia and the Shah.

After his return from Ganja, Wakhtang and his army could join the Russian forces. Armenians and a number of Muslims in our service are ready to carry our messages to him. Wakhtang has requested that His Majesty have an audience with his sister Daria Archilovna...³ Prince Giorgi Abashidze⁴ arrived with 40 men... The bombardier Ivan Tolstoi arrived on 27 October and informed the Georgians that Derbent was in our hands. Wakhtang was absent and his son Wakhusht⁵ received them... The khan of Kakhet'i,⁶ an apostate, has told the Shah that Wakhtang is in league with us and has betrayed him. The khan has joined the Lesghians and hopes to become the ruler of all of Georgia. I met with Wakhtang on 24 November and he told me that he would carry forward our message to the son of the Shah⁷ in Qazvin. I impressed upon him that Erevan must not fall to the Turks. He replied that Your Majesty's presence would boost the resistance of local Christians against the Turks. He asks if it would be possible to send a number of detachments of Russian troops to

¹*TsGADA*, Russia's Relation with Georgia, Coll. 110, file 15, ff. 487-491.

²Text has Iran, one of the few times any Russian referred to Persia by its Persian name.

³Darejan lived in Moscow and was an active supporter of the Russian move into Transcaucasia.

⁴Prince Abashidze of Imeret'i.

⁵Wakhusht, together with his father, left Georgia in 1724 and sought refuge in Moscow, where he started a Georgian press, published a Russo-Georgian dictionary, and a Georgian grammar. His main work was a historical geography of Georgia.

⁶Constantine II, who ruled Kakhet'i as Moḥammad Qolī Khan (1722-1732).

⁷Tahmāsp II (1722-1732).

Georgia. Their presence would bring the Armenians of Ganja to the Kura River.

On 13 December a messenger arrived from Ṭahmāsp stating that Isfahan had fallen and the Shah¹ had abdicated his throne to the son of Mīr Vais.² Ṭahmāsp ordered Wakhtang to gather his troops and join him in repulsing the son of Mīr Vais from Isfahan. Wakhtang has asked me for advice. Will Your Majesty permit him to send a quarter or a third of his troops to the aid the Shah and retain the rest to join the Russian army? He is afraid that the Shah will punish him if he does not respond. Wakhtang thinks that the Persians may ask the Turks to help them repulse the enemy. In that case the Turks will overrun his land. He has asked that Your Majesty send a number of Russian units to Shemakhi as soon as possible. The Armenians will then rise up and join the Georgians. Wakhtang has dispatched Prince Urap³ to hear Your Majesty's reply.

102

Minas Vardapet's Report
(22 September 1722)⁴

Prince Wakhtang arrived in Ganja with his troops in order to disperse the rebel Lesghians. His army consisted of 30,000 men. He defeated the Lesghians and left some of his troops in Ganja. He returned to Tiflis with the Armenian kat'oghikos, who wished to confer with him. The Shah [Ṭahmāsp II] has asked Wakhtang to become his commander-in-chief. Wakhtang plans to return to Ganja, gather the Armenians, and attack Shemakhi. He hopes to meet His Majesty and put himself under His command.

Kat'oghikos Esayi writes that the Shah is a prisoner of [the son of] Mīr Vais of Qandahar, who has taken Julfa and has devastated Isfahan and its environs...He adds that the moment His majesty's troops arrive in

¹Shah Solṭān Hosein (1694-1722).

²The Afghan leader, Maḥmud who ruled until 1725. Some documents incorrectly refer to him as Mīr Vais.

³Zurab Kherkheulidze.

⁴*AVPR*, Coll. 100 (1722) file 2, ff. 7-9, Russian translation in *Ezov*, doc. 213. The report was written on 18 August from Tiflis by Kat'oghikos Esayi, who had accompanied Wakhtang. Two Catholic priests brought the letter, one of them Armenian, who had traveled to Terek from Tiflis. It was then taken, via Tarku, to Minas by another Armenian, Safar Vasil'ev.

their land, the Armenians shall rise en masse and join the Russian forces. The present conditions in Persia present an ideal opportunity. There are 40,000 armed Armenians and as many Georgians who are prepared to act.

103

Minas Vardapet to Peter the Great(September 1722)¹

The Late Fedor Alekseevich Golovin presented us with Your Majesty's order, which stated that we search among the Armenians in India and Persia talented craftsmen, as well as capable merchants, and encourage them to settle in Russia. Due to delays and other problems many of them died prior to arriving in Russia. From those who did come most have died or have scattered to various regions. There are many talented Armenians craftsmen and merchants in Persia and India who wish to move to Russia. If Your Majesty wishes I am willing to encourage them to settle here for they live under difficult conditions and would be glad to serve Russia.

104

Minas Vardapet to Peter the Great(9 December 1722)²

We have received the following news from Tiflis: The son of Mīr Vais is enthroned in Isfahan. The Shah is under guard and his son is in Qazvin. The Armenian army, which had numbered 20,000, has now risen to 30,000 men. Among them are a large number of previous apostates. They have gathered in Ararat, Goght'n, and Ghap'an and are ready for battle and are awaiting Your Majesty's arrival. The region is close to the Turks, however, and they are in danger. The khan of Kakhet'i sent some men to Vagharshapat. They grabbed the kat'oghikos and took 7,000 rubles from him. The khan, who is called Moḥammad Qolī, is in control of most of the Erevan province. He asked the kat'oghikos the reason why the armed Armenians are not loyal to the Shah. The kat'oghikos replied that he had no control over that Armenian army, for they had their own

¹AVPR, Coll. 100 (1722), file 3, f. 1.

²Ezov, doc. 215.

kat'oghikos.¹The khan then released the kat'oghikos and only took the aforementioned 7,000 rubles from him. He has also sent his brother and other trusted men to Wakhtang to make peace. We have also heard that the Turkish army has reached Erzerum and Kars.

105

Armenian Archbishop of Tiflis² to Minas Vardapet
(12 December 1722)³

The Lesghians have destroyed Christian churches and have taken many Christian hostages and have killed numerous others. The son of Mīr Vais, Maḥmud, has taken over the Persian State and the Shah is under guard. Only Azerbaijan, Tabriz, Erevan, Ghap'an, and Georgia are free from the Afghans. God has granted us a shepherd, Prince Wakhtang, who is the protector of the Armenians. We have heard that the Emperor has come to the aid of the Christians. Wakhtang, his brothers, sons, two kat'oghikoses, numerous religious leaders, and gifts are preparing to go to Ganja and from there to the Emperor. They shall destroy the Lesghians and save our people...We hope that there will be at least 20 to 30 thousand Russian troops in Shemakhi, otherwise we are lost. If the Turks take Erevan, the Muslims will be strengthened and we shall be doomed. If we manage to take Erevan, then neither the Turks, nor the Persians shall rule over this land...The Armenians of Karabagh and Ghap'an are prepared to defend themselves, but they lack a leader.⁴

106

Minas Vardapet to Alexei Makarov⁵
(January-February 1723)⁶

Esayi Kat'oghikos came to Ganja with 8,000 men in arms. He told me that there are 12,000 more Armenian troops in readiness. [New] Julfa has

¹The kat'oghikos at Gandzasar.

²The Archbishop of Tiflis, appointed by Ējmiatsin, was Minas Pervazean.

³AVPR, Coll. 100 (1723), file 1, f. 5, Russian translation in *Ezov* doc. 217.

⁴Ghap'an did find a leader when Davit' Bek arrived from Georgia. He held off the Turks from his fort at Halidzor until his death, which occurred either in 1726 or 1728, see biographical notes and commentary.

⁵Alexei Vasil'evich Makarov was, at that time, a secretary of Peter the Great.

⁶*Ezov*, docs. 219-220.

fallen to the son of Mīr Vais, who has deported many Armenians to Qandahar. I was told that even if 6,000 Russian troops arrive in Shemakhi, it would be of great help to the Armenians...

During your stay in Astrakhan, you were kind enough to issue a number of notes to General Michael Afanas'evich Matiushkin¹ regarding our needs. There has been no action on those requests. We wish to advance to the sea and meet His Majesty's forces. We also request that Armenians living in Moscow, St. Petersburg, and Cherkassk on the Don be permitted to travel south without hindrance to join us. Our man Ivan Khristoforov² will assure you that many Russian Armenians will join your ranks... We must have His Majesty's permission to advance with our troops in spring of this year. Our men are anxious to join the Russians as soon as possible.³

107

Esayi Yüzbaşı to the Karabagh Commanders(1 March 1723)⁴

Yüzbaşı Esayi sends a thousands greetings to Sargis, Abraham,⁵ and others. On 14 February I dispatched T'atos to Sari and when he returned on 1 March I sent him for more news.⁶ A new courier⁷ arrived from the Shah and brought an order.⁸ I opened it and read it... It stated that the Shah had sent an envoy to make peace with the Russian Tsar. Derbent, Baku, and Gilan was to be handed to Russia... There are rumors that Russia has sent

¹General Matiushkin (1676-1737) participated in the battle of Poltava (1709) and was one of the commanders of Peter during the Persian campaign. Upon his departure from Persia, Peter appointed him as the commander-in-chief of the Russian forces on the Caspian shores.

²The envoy of the Karabagh Armenians to Russia.

³The originals of these letters are in *TsGADA*, Peter the Great's Secretariat Collection (1723), file 62, ff. 120, 124. File 63, folio 506, contains an interesting document from Vasilii Levashov, the Russian commander in Rasht. He reported that the Armenian Peter Sergeev (Petros Gilanents') had recruited a cavalry unit of fifty Armenians who were of great help to him.

⁴*AVPR*, Coll. 100 (1724), file 4 f. 29.

⁵Abraham Yüzbaşı was a commander in Karabagh. In 1730 he and his followers joined the army of General Rumiantsev.

⁶Text has the Persian term *kabar*.

⁷Text has the Persian term *čapar*.

⁸Text has the Arabo-Persian term *raqam*.

a 12,000-man strong army to take Ganja and that they have already taken Shemakhi. These are not true. I have dispatched Mr. Ap'layt'on to Wakhtang [VI] and to Shahnavaḡ Khan to see if they can send help.¹...I have to tell you that the Georgian promises are also empty...²The Ottoman army is numerous. Their promises of peace sent by Moḡammad Qolī Khan³ are not reliable. Once they arrive there will be no Armenians left. All will be taken prisoner. Be cautious,⁴I shall soon arrive...

108

Kat'oghikos Nersēs to Peter the Great

(March 1723)⁵

The humble kat'oghikos Nersēs of the land of Aghuank', Karabagh, and Shirvan bows before Your Highness. Our people and we suffer under rule of the infidel. They torture, rob, and kill us. Those who escape seek refuge in the mountains where they live without bread or water. We put our hope first in God and second in Your Majesty. We ask that You free our people like the Prophet Moses liberated his people from the Pharaoh. The moment the Persian State collapsed, the Muslims attacked us from all sides. The arrival of Your forces, as well as those of Prince Wakhtang, scared them, but the khan of Kakhet'i, Moḡammad Qolī, who has converted to Islam, has attacked Wakhtang and our people. We are fearful but the arrival of Russian troops has spurred us into action. Several thousands of armed Armenians live in the their mountain lairs and are ready to fight. Among them are Esayi from Bardav (Barda), Sargis of Jarapert (Jraberd), who is from the princely family and his yūzbaşis,⁶Shrvan, Grigor, Sarukhan, and Avan. Grigor is also from a princely family, while Shrvan, Sarukhan, and Avan are from the district of Khachen. I beg Your Majesty to send them three separate decrees so that they organize our people into action.

¹Text has the Persian term *komak*.

²Text has the Persian term *pūč*.

³Constantine II, ruler of Kakhet'i who was installed by the Ottomans and ruled as Moḡammad Qolī Khan from 1722 until 1732.

⁴Text has the Arabo-Persian term *eḡtiyāt*.

⁵AVPR, Coll. no. 100 (1723), file 1, f. 1. The letter was written in early March and arrived in St. Petersburg on 24th of May.

⁶Officers in charge of 100 men.

109

The Meliks of Karabagh to Peter the Great(March 1723)¹

Your servant Esayi from the district of Barda, from the village of Gulistan informs Your Majesty that our people have suffered tremendously by the actions of the infidels. The Lesghians, some 50 to 60 thousand strong, have attacked Ganja, Barda, and Dizak, have looted Christian villages and killed some of the population. They have enslaved men and women, young and old and have taken them to Daghestan. During their retreat they forced the Armenians into the Kura River, where many drowned, others were killed and the river ran red with their blood...I Esayi, together with Shrvan and Sargis of Jraber, and the leader of the Armenians of Ganja, Hovsēp', gathered a force of 12,000 men and began fighting the Lesghians and the Aghvan Muslims...We request that You sent us a writ so that the local people will believe in our cause and join us. We request that Your Majesty order Wakhtang to come to Ganja. We shall join him and fight against the forces of Moḥammad Qolī Khan of Kakhet'i.

110

Minas Vardapet to Peter the Great(19 April 1723)²

Today, 15 April, I the lowest...(document is torn) received a letter sent to Astrakhan from the Armenian Aivaz...(text is smudged) from Rasht. The letter was forwarded by Colonel Shipov.³It states that the Armenians of Gilan have welcomed him and have offered to help him. The son of the Shah has also ordered that everyone cooperate with Shipov...

A number of residents from Ardebil came to Rasht and stated that some 24,000 Armenians have left Ardebil for Nakhichevan. The Armenian kat'oghikos, Esayi, with 12,000 troops awaits Your Majesty's army between Ganja and Ghap'an.

The son of the Shah, currently in Tabriz, has ordered four khans to attack the Armenians of Akulis. There was a battle and two of the khans

¹AVPR, Coll. no. 100 (1723), file 1, f. 2.

²Ezov, doc. 224.

³Nicholas Mikhailovich Shipov commanded two battalions in Gilan.

left. There were many casualties. Prince Wakhtang sent Georgians to aid the Armenians.

A servant, who is an apostate and a friend of the Armenians, informed us that the son of the Shah has sent an envoy from Tabriz to Turkey. The Turks have also sent an envoy to him from Erzerum. The son of the Shah is planning to go to Ardebil.

The Afghans after taking Isfahan, sent forces to Qazvin. The local population opened the doors of the fort and welcomed them...(document torn); they then caught them unawares and slaughtered all of the Afghans. The Afghans are now preparing to march on Qazvin. Bread is very expensive in Isfahan, a *batman*, which weighs 13 pounds, is worth 50 rubles, grain is 70 rubles a *batman*.

A man arrived in Gilan from Erzerum informs that seven pashas are poised right on the Persian border. One of those pashas has gone to Tiflis to ask Wakhtang to surrender the city to the Turks. Wakhtang responded that he would not give the city to the Muslims. The Turkish Sultan has sent a pasha to Davud Bek in Shirvan.

On 2 March Armenians from Babylon (Baghdad) arrived by caravan to Gilan. They say that the Turks have been corresponding with the Afghans and that a Turkish envoy, with 400 men, in the guise of merchants, has arrived in Isfahan. Hasan Pasha of Baghdad was poisoned and lost his senses. He was cured, however. His son, who was in Basra, was appointed pasha. The Turkish Sultan has recalled Hasan, but he has refused to leave Baghdad...

111

Peter Tolstoi to Minas Pervazean

(19 April 1723)¹

The Turks have asked His Majesty not to attack the Lesghians and Muslims who live near Georgia. His Majesty has responded that he shall refrain from any military action in that region provided that the Turks do not attack the Christian population and refrain from invading Persia. We have been informed, however, that the Turks have amassed troops at the border and are prepared to invade both Georgia and Persia. His Majesty has sent a number of units to Georgia and has instructed that you remain at the side of the Georgian prince, regardless of Turkish moves...

¹AVPR, Coll. no. 100 (1723) file 2, f. 2.

112

Decree Regarding Armenian Merchants(14 May 1723)¹

The Senate shall call two or three of the most influential Armenian merchants of the Trading Company and instruct them to engage in trade with Russian merchants. The silk that they previously took to Europe should now be sold to Russian merchants as well. All silk from Gilan should be sold in Russia. His Majesty has ordered that Armenians who have stores in Astrakhan may travel to Gilan freely for the purpose of obtaining raw silk and selling it in Russia.

113

Minas Vardapet's Report(15 May 1723)²

An Armenian, Nerses Artem'ev, from Malatia arrived in Astrakhan from Tiflis. He has a residence in Tiflis and came to Astrakhan to visit his brother, Memel, and to buy goods.

He left Tiflis on 11 November 1722 and traveled to Erzerum, where he saw numerous artillery pieces and many troops who were en route to Kars under the command of nine pashas.

The Turks sent an envoy to the son of the Shah asking him to let their troops into Erevan. He replied that if they have come to aid him against his enemies, there was no need. For he would deal with the Afghans himself. If he loses then Persia is open to the Turks. The pashas and their troops did not cross into Persia for the two states had peaceful relations for many years.³

The Turks asked Wakhtang to surrender Tiflis and he refused. The Turkish Sultan ordered that his troops remain at the border and not cross into Georgia until the Russian army set foot into the region.

Nerses continued his journey on land from Erzerum to Constantinople on 20 December. On 1 January 1723 he met thirty men who were sent by

¹PZSR, VII, doc. 4224.

²AVPR, Coll. no. 100 (1723), file 3, ff. 20-21.

³The peace of 1639 ceased hostilities between Persia and the Ottoman Empire.

the Sultan to Davud Bek of Shirvan. They carried gifts and 30,000 gold coins to encourage him and his followers to join the Turks.¹

Upon arriving in Constantinople, on 6 January, Nerses was told by his fellow Armenians, who had access to the houses of notables, that the Turkish army was planning to enter Persia and conquer the lands of the Armenians and Georgians.

In March Nerses, who was still in Constantinople, heard that the Shah's son, had sent Moḥammad Qolī Khan (Constantine II) to Tiflis to capture Wakhtang alive. With God's help, the Persians were defeated and Mohammad Qoli was captured alive and Wakhtang became the ruler of Kakhet'i as well.²

The Turkish army is preparing to march into the Crimea.

On 11 March Nerses left Constantinople for the Crimea. There he heard that the Lesghians had asked Bakhti-Girei Delli Sultan, for help. He had replied that if the Turkish Sultan and the khan of the Crimea order him he would help them.

Nerses left the Crimea and via Cherkassk and Tsaritsyn arrived in Astrakhan and reported all this to the Armenian leaders here.

114

*Peter Tolstoi to Vasilii Levashov*³

(17 May 1723)⁴

We had ordered you to establish secret communications with Mīr Vais of Qandahar.⁵ You were told to use a local Tatar or the Consul Semen

¹See doc. 108.

²In fact, Moḥammad Qolī was not captured. He sought refuge with the Lesghians. He returned, took Tiflis and forced Wakhtang to seek refuge in Russia.

³Levashov was in charge of the Caspian region, see biographical notes.

⁴AVPR, Russia's relations with Persia (1723), file 10, f. 18.

⁵Russian and Armenian documents of this period confuse Mīr Vais with his elder son, Maḥmūd. Mīr Vais was the chief of the Ghalzai Afghans. Giorgi XI, who was at that time the governor of Qandahar, did not trust Mīr Vais, arrested him and sent to Isfahan. Mīr Vais gave bribes and made friends in Isfahan. He convinced the Shah that he was innocent. He received permission to go to Mecca, where he obtained a *fatwa*, which permitted his people, all Sunni, to revolt against the Shi'i Persians. He returned to Persia in 1708 just as Israel Ori had reached Shemakhi. Mīr Vais told the Shah that Peter the Great was planning to take over Armenia and Georgia with the help of Giorgi. Mīr Vais was honored and sent back to Afghanistan. He killed Giorgi in 1709 and rebelled against

Avramov. Avramov, however, has already left Gilan and is on his way here. We have now ordered the governor of Astrakhan, Artemii Volynskii, to find from the Armenians or other local people, a trusted and talented man who will be able to carry out this mission.

115

Peter the Great's Declaration to the Armenian People(3 June 1723)¹

On the third day in June 1723 His Imperial Majesty issued the following declaration in response to the petitions of the Armenians of Persia. The declaration was written at the Department of Foreign Affairs and was witnessed by General-Admiral Count Fedor Matveevich Apraksin and Privy Counselor, Peter Andreevich Tolstoi. The document has the great seal of the Russian State and has been entrusted to the Armenian Ivan Karapet.²

With the Grace of God, We Peter I, Emperor and Autocrat of All Russia...Greetings to the honest Armenians living in Persia.

You are aware that the Russian and Persian Empires have had friendly relations from ancient times. We exchanged correspondence and have traded freely until our merchants were killed in Shemakhi. We were then forced to send troops and with the help of God have managed to take and to protect the cities along the Caspian coast through which merchants travel to our State. The said merchants belonged, for the most part, to your people. Thus the Armenians of Persia and those living in various cities in Russia have asked us to restore order. Armenian merchants have traveled, traded, and lived in our cities and we have granted to one of your brothers, Ivan Karapet, this decree, which states that we shall continue our benevolence toward the Armenian people.

Memorandum

We have received the numerous petitions from the Armenian kat'oghikoses and the leaders of Karabagh and are dispatching Ivan

the Shah. He died in 1715. His son, Mahmūd invaded Persia in 1719 and again in 1721-1722. He captured Isfahan and declared himself Shah in October 1722. He received the Russian and Turkish envoys (1723), tried to consolidate his hold over all of Persia and died or was killed in 1725.

¹AVPR, Coll. no. 100 (1723), file 2, ff. 5-6, 15-16. Armenian translation in *Ezov*, docs. 228, 230.

²Envoy of Peter the Great to the meliks of Karabagh, see biographical notes.

Karapet to inform them that We have placed them under Our protection and will defend them against the Muslims. We are sending official decrees to the four Armenian military leaders, who have armed men and who have requested our help. They have to decide what requires Our immediate attention. We have already taken Gilan and our army is marching on Baku. With God's help We shall soon be able to help the Armenians and rescue them from the Muslim yoke. If for some reason they cannot defend themselves or Our troops do not reach their lands, We invite them to come to the Caspian towns which are under our control. In the meantime, We recommend that they remain quiet until such time when we are able to intervene. The declaration should assure them of our intentions. The wording of this declaration is purposely vague so that if it falls into the hands of the Muslims they Armenian shall not suffer and *our plans are not revealed*.¹

116

Statute Concerning Custom Duties Paid by Armenian Merchants
(5 July 1723)²

His Majesty has decreed that merchants from the Armenian Trading Company carrying Persian or European goods pay the following duties: 1-Merchandise from Persia exported via the sea will be assessed at three percent of the value of the merchandise. Goods brought to Astrakhan for transport to St. Petersburg shall be recorded and sealed. Duties and transport costs shall be paid only once...2-Goods imported for sale in Russia will be taxed according to the same rate as other foreign merchants. 3-European goods transported via Russia to Persia that do not compete with Russian manufactured goods shall be assessed at three percent of their value. Those goods that can be found in Russia, however, will be heavily taxed...4-European goods for sale in Russia will be taxed according to the tariff. 5-Gold coins brought from Europe for the purpose of purchasing raw silk from Persia shall be recorded but shall not be taxed. The said record shall be forwarded to the Astrakhan customs. Gold beyond those coins recorded [in Archangel or Moscow] shall be

¹The words in italic are added in the margin. On 6 June the Department of Foreign Affairs sent a note to Matiushkin instructing him to permit Ivan Karapet to travel to Persia, *AVPR*, Coll. no 100 (1723), file 2, f. 21.

²*PZSR*, VII, doc. 4745.

confiscated. 6-All other items are according to the tariff sheet or, if not listed, assessed at three percent of value.¹

117

Armenians of Shemakhi to Major General Matiushkin(17 August 1723)²

An Armenian priest, Anton Arakelov, from Shemakhi arrived in Baku and sought an audience with Major-General Michael Afonas'evich Matiushkin. He said that at the end of June the son of the Shamkhal of Tarku and 200 men from the pasha of Erzerum arrived in Shemakhi and met Davud Bek. They brought gifts and stayed in Shemakhi for twenty days. After that they left with Davud Bek towards the Kura River. They left a *kapichi*³ pasha with a dozen men. Davud Bek planned to cross the Kura and take Ganja, but the Armenian army did not permit him to cross and he remained on the other side of the river with his 2,000 men. He sent a message to the pasha of Erzerum, who is in Tiflis with the son of Wakhtang.⁴ There are 3,000 Turkish soldiers in Tiflis. There are no Turkish troops in Ganja and there is no information regarding the Turkish plans for Shemakhi...

118

Petros, Son of Sargis, to Minas Vardapet

(September 1723)

130. News was also received on the same date (31 August) that the Persians had advanced and entered Qapanistan (Ghap'an). They had seized all the arms, instruments, gunpowder, bullets that the Armenians in Ghap'an possessed. This information also has not yet been verified.⁵

¹On 20 September 1723 a decree allowed Armenians, Indians, Bukharans, and other foreigners were permitted to conduct trade via Astrakhan by paying an annual license fee of 821 rubles, *PZSR*, VII, doc. 4304.

²*TsGADA*, Journal of Peter the Great, II, book 63, p. 748.

³*Kapıcı*, or a commander of janissaries.

⁴Refers to Shahnavaz, See Bournoutian, *History of Wars*, p. 16.

⁵*Gilanentz*, p. 62. Certain terms have been changed to conform to the rest of this text.

131. On the above date, Harut'iwn of Ghap'an arrived from Tabriz. He stated that an Armenian *yüzbaşı* named Qanlu Shaban had had a quarrel with the son of Melik Bagi (Bagher)¹ of the village of Avetaranots', in the district of Dizak, (but that) they had been reconciled. Melik Bagher's son incited Qanlu Shaban to a banquet of honor in his village. Shaban went to the banquet with 300 Armenians. Melik Bagher's son had previously made the following arrangement with the villagers: he himself would take Qanlu Shaban and a few of his men in his own house, while his villagers would divide the remainder of Shaban's men amongst themselves, each taking 5 or 6 to his house. He had given orders that when they heard a gun fired, each man was to kill the guests in his house. In this way they murdered this poorly newly promoted Armenian *yüzbaşı* and his 300 men,² almost in the same way as the Khivans had killed Bekovich.³

133. Reverend Father, our poor and pitiful Armenian nation is being greatly oppressed. The Persians are plundering the district of Goght'n and they are subjecting the inhabitants to such horrors as cannot be written down in words. I wish that I was dead and had not heard such dreadful things. Ghap'an is also undoubtedly afflicted, as I have stated in section 130. It is the same in Erevan, where they strike terror into the Armenians and (the inmates of) their monasteries, who have been forced to address an appeal to Parsadan Beg, explaining their misery, and imploring him to do something for them. Parsadan Beg has sent a petition to the Shah and has obtained a *raqam* from him, which he has sent to Erevan, in order that they may not trouble the Armenians there, any more.

Our Armenian army, which, as they say, consists of 60,000 men in three divisions, and is stationed in three *seghnaghs*,⁴ is on the one hand looking forward to the Grace of God, and, on the other, is anxiously awaiting the arrival of the Great King (Peter the Great). They are in great need of warm encouragement, and Your Grace must think of them, be-

¹Original text has Melik Bashi.

²Ivan Karapet accurately identifies him as Melik Bagher. According to Ivan the number killed were 47, see doc. 130.

³*Gilanentz*, p. 63. Refers to the murder of Prince Alexander Bekovich Cherkasov, who, in 1717, was sent with an armed expedition by Peter the Great to Khiva. The Russians were all killed while guests of the khan of Khiva.

⁴The Armenian texts have *sghnagh* or *seghnakh* from the Turkish *sığınak* meaning fortified place, shelter or refuge.

cause all the Persians and Turks are after their blood; because of them, the Armenians are in trouble and suffering everywhere.

Believe me, the Armenians are ruined for several reasons. For one thing, they say that they are bound to be massacred, because they are alleged to have wrecked this country by bringing the Russians into Persia, by taking the Afghans to Isfahan and by raising 60,000 Armenian soldiers to join the Russians and destroy Persia. Reverend Father...I have not sent on even one of the letters that you gave me, they are all with me. I am in a dilemma; if I am to send them, the roads are closed and are foes are numerous. If I do not send them, then what will happen? Your Grace handed them to me sealed. I have written to you several times to ask you to allow me to open them and to send on copies, keeping the originals with me...but Your Grace has written nothing respecting them...You have sent us here, but you do not write to us to let us know what our future is to be or what will be our final lot. We have come here, but up to the present the local Armenians have done nothing. We are sitting here idle and our expenses are enormous...

Aivaz's¹ servant, who had stolen money from him and escaped, has been caught and all the money has been recovered. Recently, Aivaz applied to General Levashov and Colonel Shipov for leave, on the grounds that his servant was in Astrakhan and that he had kept back Aivaz's goods...Now that Aivaz has been given permission to sail from here to Baku by ship, and from there to Qalaqad. I believe that our chiefs here have written to you and to the Governor, Artemii Petrovich Volynskii, to return Aivaz as soon as possible.

Reverend Father, it is a pity that his servant has not sent the goods, because the *chokha*² now costs 5,000 *dinars*, whereas it was usually 2,800 to 3,000 *dinars* per *gaz*...³

I have asked you several times, and have written to Avet to let me have my account, since there is death for everyone, and he has gunpowder of which my share is one barrel. I hope that you have already sent it. If you have not done so, be so good as to send it, as we have no powder at all. You will, of course, hand over the gunpowder and lead to Aivaz for him to bring here. I have also asked you to obtain a letter from the

¹For more details on Aivaz, see document 86.

²Refers to *chukheh*, which was a coarse woolen fabric or felt cloak and was in great demand as winter clothing in Caspian provinces.

³A Persian measure of length, which, depending on locality, varied from 41 to 44 inches.

authorities concerned to Levashov instructing him to supply us with gunpowder if we need any.

The following is a list of our men: Eremia, the son of Qumbreh; Khalaf, the son of Murad; Petros, the son of the Reverend Gaspar; Karapet, the son of Gregory, Letzi Stepan Yakovl'ev; Harut'iwn, the son of Mnatsakan of Ganja; Bijan, the son of Mirza; Stepan, the son of Gaspar; Stepan, the son of Allahverdi; and Shved Maxim Alexandrov.¹

119

Russo-Persian Treaty
(12 September 1723)²

1. His Imperial Majesty, the Tsar of Russia, extends his friendship to His Highness, Shah Tahmasp [II] and promises to aid him against those who have rebelled. He promises to send, as soon as possible, Russian cavalry and infantry units to Persia to crush the rebels and to reinstate the Shah on the throne.
2. In exchange His Highness the Shah cedes to His Majesty, the Sovereign of Russia, the cities of Derbent and Baku with all their dependencies on the Caspian Sea. He also cedes the provinces of Gilan, Mazandaran and Astarabad in exchange for the cost of maintaining the Russian troops in Persia.
3. The Russian troops will need beasts of burden to transport artillery, ammunition, and provisions along the Caspian coast. The Persian ambassador has assured His majesty that horses are available along the way and shall be provided. The agreement stipulates that such horses will not cost more than 12 rubles and that camels for carrying the baggage will be provided free of charge. His Highness promises that bread, meat, and salt will be provided to the Russian troops at the agreed price: grain at one *grivenok* for every *shahi batman*; beef at five *altyns* per *shahi batman*; sheep weighing at least 4 *shahi batmans* for one ruble; and salt for 2 kopeks per *shahi batman*. If these items have increased in price when the Russian troops arrive His Highness, the Shah, will make up the difference from his own treas-

¹*Gilanentz*, pp. 64-69. Ten of these men were recruited in Russia and came to Persia with Petros. Soon after this report, Petros managed to recruit at least 40 more men from among the local Armenians and formed his squadron.

²T. Iuzefovich', *Dogovory Rossii s' Vostokom* (St. Petersburg, 1869), pp. 185-189. The treaty was signed in St. Petersburg.

ury. The envoy of the Shah upon return to Persia shall make the necessary preparations.

4. Subjects of His Majesty and His Highness shall travel freely between their respective lands. They shall enter, exit and trade without hindrance. Those who dare to harm the said subjects shall be punished severely by both governments.
5. His Majesty promises to be a friend to those who are friends of Persia and an enemy to those who are hostile to Persia.

120

Armenians of Ganja to Major General Matiushkin (1723)¹

The Turks have broken the peace agreement and have invaded our land. They have entered the Erevan province and have looted the Ējmiatsin Monastery. They have turned our places of worship into stables. An army of 18,000 men led by pashas with artillery and bombs has moved on Ganja. We fought them for eighteen days and killed many of their pashas. The Turks also sent a large army to Tiflis. They took over the city and have enslaved Christian women and children. We hope that His Majesty will send troops to help us defend Ganja. Otherwise the enemy shall enter Ganja and shall slaughter us all...²

121

Kat'oghikos Esayi and the Meliks of Karabagh to Peter the Great (1 November 1723)³

The Lesghians and other Muslims are attacking us daily. We rely on God and on Your Majesty's help. On one side we face the mountains tribesmen and the Persians and on the other side, the Ottomans. We resemble

¹*TsGADA*, Journal of Peter the Great, II, book 66, p. 551. The date of the letter has the Persian date, which can be either 1723 or 1724. Since the Ottomans invaded Erevan in 1724, the later date is more probable.

²Another document lists the commanders of the Ottoman forces: Ibrahim Pasha was to attack Ganja; Kara Mustafa Pasha was to go to Shirvan; and Koprulu Oglu Pasha to Tabriz via Daghestan. The document adds that the Turks planned to massacre the Armenian population, but Davud Bek had stopped them, *ibid.*, pp. 515-516.

³*AVPR*, Coll. 100 (1723), file 2, f. 3.

sheep that lack a shepherd and are surrounded by wolves, We ask Your Majesty's protection and beg that you send Russian troops. The Turks have already taken Tiflis and have moved on Ganja, where after a twenty-day battle they returned to Tiflis. With the help of God and Your Majesty we shall be able to defeat them. The Persian Shah has disappeared and we fear that the Turks will destroy Great Armenia, together with the Holy See of St. Gregory.¹ We are sending our request with the priest from Shemakhi, Anton in the year 1172 (1723) of the Armenian calendar. Signed and Sealed by Your servants Avan Yüzbaşı,² Mirza Yüzbaşı, Balasan Yüzbaşı, Panos, Sughi, Dawit', Melkum, Zak'aria, and Ohan.³

122

Declaration of the Elders of Dizak and Varanda
(January 1724)⁴

The purpose of this letter is to state that on 4 January 1724, we, the Armenian of the lands of Dizak and Varanda, our yüzbaşıs and all⁵ our young and old, vardapets and priests, meliks, *kadkodas*,⁶ elders, and peasants⁷ gathered together. We swear by Christ that we are prepared to serve His Highness and obey all the King's [Peter the Great] commands. If we betray him he can have our heads and our property. Written in the *seghnagh* of Shushi in January of the year 1724.

Signed and sealed by Avan Yüzbaşı, Mirza Yüzbaşı, and eighteen others.⁸

¹Eastern Armenia and Ējmiatsin.

²Avan was the main leader of the Armenian resistance movement in Karabagh, see biographical notes.

³The letter arrived in Moscow in March 1724. It was translated by the Armenian Ignatii Fratsov, son of Sharimov.

⁴*AVPR*, Coll. 100 (1724), file 4, f. 19.

⁵Text has the Persian term *tamam*.

⁶Text has *k'odkhodēk'ov* (*kadkodas* or village heads).

⁷Text has the Persian term *ra'yat*.

⁸On 12 January Avan Yüzbaşı sent a note to Russia stating that the Shushi *seghnagh* had 500 men who possessed guns (*t'vankavor sahab*—from the Persian *saheb-e tofang*) and 6400 others who were willing (*hazir*—from the Persian *hāẓer*) to fight but had no weapons, *AVPR*, Coll. 100 (1724), file 4, f. 19.

123

Ivan Karapet to Peter Tolstoi(5 February 1724)¹

I, your humble servant, report that in December I went to the Gandzasar Monastery and read His Majesty's declaration. Three of the *seghnaghs* submitted to the king [Peter the Great] and two did not. The leader of one of the two wished to submit to the Ottomans and the melik of the other wished to submit to the Shah. The one who wished to remain loyal to Persia, was especially adamant and damaging² to our cause. I told him that I would bring a cannon and destroy the walls of his fort. He was scared and sent word that he would submit to Russia. There remains only one *seghnagh*, the one that plans to submit to the Turks... They say that when the Russian King arrives they shall submit to him. There are no real leaders in the rest of the region. Each man has gathered some twenty men and controls one or two villages. The land has plenty of food and minerals... A messenger from the Shah arrived a few days ago and informed us that the Shah was in Nakhichevan and had gone to Ardebil. The Shah does not have an army. Wakhtang and his son have fled from Tiflis. The Turkish garrison in Tiflis has 2,000 men. They have remained in the fort. There are 20,000 men in the *seghnaghs*... I have sent one copy of this report to Baku and another to Derbent.

124

Kat'oghikos Esayi and Meliks of Karabagh to Peter the Great(5 February 1724)³

Our clergy, civilians, and military prostrate themselves before the throne of Your Majesty. Upon receiving Your Highness' decree delivered by Ivan Karapet, we were overjoyed. It is as the angel of God arrived and assured us protection from the enemy. Surrounded on all sides we have so far managed to defend ourselves. We await the arrival of Your Majesty... We cannot estimate how many of our people will join the Russian army for they are scattered throughout the region. We shall know the

¹AVPR, Coll. 100 (1724), file 4, f. 31.

²The text has the Persian term *zarar*.

³*Ibid.*, file 2, f. 4.

moment your men arrive. We are ready and are prepared to follow your orders. Our fighters are in desperate need of arms and ammunition. Esayi Kat'oghikos, Avan Yüzbaşı, Mirza Yüzbaşı, and Melik T'amraz.

125

Bishop Martiros to the Commandant of Derbent

(24 February 1724)¹

Your man, Sivum, was here in Gulistan and I sent him to meet with the Armenian leaders. On his return he stated that he had met Ivan Karapet, Yüzbaşı Avan, and Kat'oghikos Esayi. He added that the Armenian leaders are of two minds, some wish to seek protection from the Persians, others from the Turks. Melik Bagher seems to favor the Persians. The son of the Shah is in Nakhichevan, while Mīr Vais [Maḥmud] has taken Qazvin. The Afghans tried to take Hamadan, but the Armenians defended it. A citizen of Ardebil has arrived and informed us that the Turks have sent an envoy to Mīr Vais and he has dispatched his own envoy to them. Half of the [Armenian] citizens of Ganja have abandoned their homes and have sought refuge in Tiflis. Others have fled to the Armenian *seghnaghs*. Some say that Wakhtang's son has defeated the Turks and taken Tiflis. There are fifty Turks in Shemakhi who are under the command of a Buluk-başı. 'Omar Shamshadil Bek, the son of the Shamkhal of Tarku, lives in Shemakhi. Surkhai² lives in Qabale and is in constant correspondence with the Turks. He has asked the Turks for reinforcements against Russian attacks and the Turks have promised to send troops in March. The Armenians in the region are frightened and beg His Majesty to rescue them from the infidels...³

¹*TsGADA*, Coll. Papers of Peter I, group II, vol. 66, pp. 530-531.

²Chief of the Kazi-Kumuk tribe of Daghestan.

³It is important to note that the Muslims of Ganja petitioned Peter to aid them against the Turks as well, the text reads "from the Qajar *ḡāzis*, *rīš-sefīds*, *kadḡodās*, *yüzbaşis* and other *bandegān* (slaves) of Ganja," *AVPR*, Coll. 100 (1739), file 2, ff. 68, 71, 74.

126

Kat'oghikos Esayi to Ivan Karapet(5 March 1724)¹

Your letter arrived and we know how you are. You have listed the accusations² against me. I had left the region long before and have no idea what occurred there. I am fed up³ of begging⁴ people to do the right thing. I know that each act of mine makes some happy and others unhappy. I am not aware who is spreading these rumors against me. Thank God that you are aware of the character⁵ of these people. I have no news. Please inform me who is accusing me... Christ knows that I am 1,000 times more upset about this than you are...

127

Russo-Ottoman Treaty(13 June 1724)⁶

Article 1. The Lesghians of the province of Shirvan having as Muslims asked for the protection of the Sublime Porte, the later has granted them protection and suggested as Khan, one Davud, giving him credentials and assigning him Shemakhi as residence. In order that this town, the khan and the peoples under him may have their frontiers known, the following is agreed upon: Riders provided and furnished with good and accurate timepieces will proceed on horseback. at a trot, along the quickest route from Shemakhi to the border of the Caspian Sea; upon their arrival at that sea the number of hours taken from Shemakhi will be calculated. That number will be divided by three; the riders will return by the same route and upon completing two thirds of it will post a marker at that point. One third—from that post to Shemakhi—shall belong to the Sub-

¹AVPR, Coll. 100 (1739), file 2, f. 35.

²Text has the Persian term *tohmat*.

³Text has the Persian term *'āḡez*.

⁴Text has the Persian term *eltemās*.

⁵Text has the Persian term *tarbī'yat*.

⁶J. C. Hurewitz, ed., *Diplomacy in the Near and Middle East: A Documentary Record: 1535-1914*, I (Princeton, 1956), pp. 42-45. The original text in French is in Gabriel Effendi Noradounghian, *Recueil d'actes internationaux de l'empire ottoman*, I (Paris, 1897), pp. 233-238. The Russian text is in AVPR, Russia's Relations with Turkey (1724), file 4, ff. 27-40.

lime Porte under the government of the said Khan; the other two-thirds located between the post and the sea shall belong to His Tsarist Majesty. Similarly, riders will proceed from the town of Derbent beginning at the seacoast and moving toward the interior of the country, on horseback at a trot, for a period of twenty-two hours at the end of which a marker will be posted. From the marker placed between Shemakhi and the sea, a straight line will be drawn, with a sufficient number of small markers, to the marker placed at 22 hours' distance from Derbent. Another marker will be placed at the point where the frontier of Shirvan ends and at the point reached in trotting for twenty-two hours in a straight line from the seacoast to the interior. Similarly, riders will proceed at a trot from the marker placed in leaving from Derbent to the marker placed at the frontier of Shirvan, this line being thereby indicated with several small markers. From the marker placed near Shemakhi in following the line up to the frontiers of Shirvan all areas toward the interior from Shirvan shall belong to the Sublime Porte; the rest from the line to the Caspian Sea shall remain to the Tsar. A straight line will be drawn from the marker placed between Shemakhi and the Caspian Sea to the point where the Aras (Arax) River flows into the Kur (Kura) River; this line will serve as a boundary so that all areas between the line and the interior shall belong to the Sublime Porte and all that is located from the line up to the Caspian Sea shall belong to the Tsar. But since at the point where the Aras flows into the Kura the territory belongs in part to the Sublime Porte, in part to the Tsar and in part to Persia, thereby constituting a point where three frontiers join, the Sublime Porte is free to build a fortress there and to furnish it with a garrison. The said Tsar is also at liberty to build a fortress on his territory. These fortresses shall, nevertheless, be established with the reciprocal knowledge of the two parties and shall be erected at three leagues from the frontier...And since there are few strong points on these new frontiers, the two parties are permitted to construct fortresses in their respective territories for the safety of their subjects, and to maintain garrisons on condition that the said fortresses be located three leagues from the frontiers.

Article 2. Since the Sublime Porte considers the areas belonging to it in the province of Shirvan as a special government having its special Khan, as stated above, Shemakhi shall be the residence of the Khan who will govern the areas in the province of Shirvan belonging to the Sublime Porte. Shemakhi will remain in its former state without the erection of new fortifications, and the Sublime Porte will not furnish it with a garri-

son or send troops or a military command there, unless the Khan appointed by the Sublime Porte should renounce his loyalty and plot rebellion...If the Porte's subjects lay siege or disturb the regions belonging to the Tsar, the Sublime Porte will be responsible for taking remedial action to reestablish order and to punish those who have disturbed the peace...And since the Sublime Porte controls the entire province of Georgia where many garrisons with commanders named by the Sublime Porte are located, if its should become necessary to send a large number of troops to maintain order there, provisional notice will be given to the commanders appointed by the Tsar on the Caspian Sea in order to avoid any suspicion...

Article 3. Concerning the frontiers of the provinces conquered by the Sublime Porte in the Persian Empire...Starting at the town of Ardebil which remains to Persia, riders will proceed at a trot for one hour toward Tabriz where a marker will be placed. From there a line will be drawn to the point where the three frontiers meet. All the points on the side of the line where Ordubad and Tabriz are located, such as Ordubad, Tabriz, Lake Tabriz (Urumiye), Marand, Maraghe, Urumiye, Khoi, Churas, Salmas and other areas in the province of Azerbaijan with their dependencies as well as points located on this direct line, Ganja, Barda'a, Karabagh, Nakhichevan, the towns of Erevan and Uchkelis (Üç-Kilisa or Ėjmiatsin) and all the towns and inhabited places situated in the province of Erevan shall belong to the Sublime Porte...¹

128

Report by Apel of Akulis (16 June 1724)²

Apel, an Armenian resident from Akulis arrived in Baku from Tabriz and Ardebil and gave the following report:

He was in Tabriz at the end of April and witnessed the beheading of 30 Armenians from Ghap'an on the Shah's order. The Armenians were

¹There are a total of six articles in this treaty; the other three state that if Shah Tahmāsp gave up Persian Kurdistan and Hamadan, as well as the above regions to the Ottomans, they would recognize him as Shah and help him repulse the Afghans. Since the Russians had obtained a similar agreement from Tahmāsp for Baku, Derbent, Rasht, Gilan, Astarabad, and Mazandaran, the Ottomans demanded the same for their conquests.

²*AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Persia (1724), file 6, ff. 12-13.

purchasing gunpowder and lead and transporting it to Ghap'an. At the end of April or the beginning of May the Shah left Tabriz for Ardebil and Apel, together with the Georgian guard, accompanied him. The citizens of Tabriz begged the Shah not to leave them for they feared the Kurds. They even promised to collect 30,000 *tomans* if he stayed. The Shah promised to return soon. The Turks and Kurds have destroyed a number of villages around Tabriz...The Shah is planning to send troops against the Armenians of Ghap'an. Many armed Armenians have gathered in Ghap'an and have been joined by Armenians from Nakhichevan. The Muslims of the region have complained to the Shah that they have suffered in the hands of the Armenians, hence the Shah is sending a force to smash the Armenians.

129

Ivan Karapet to the Russian Command in the Caucasus

(18 July 1724)¹

On 15 April I went to Ghap'an with the Armenian army,²because³a letter arrived from Ghap'an informing us that the khan of Nakhichevan and the sultan of Bargushat has attacked Ghap'an with a large army and have taken many prisoners. The reason for this was that, Davit' [Bek], an Armenian from Georgia, had arrived there with 30 men. He told the Armenians that he was sent by the Georgian ruler and convinced them to gather an army of four to five thousand men...I showed them the Tsar's declaration and they all swore allegiance to him. The Kurds blocked our way to Karabagh. Our small group of two hundred men attacked them, defeated them and returned to Karabagh...The Armenians here complain that it has been eight months since I delivered the Tsar's decree and no Russian army has arrived. They say that I have lied to them. For if I was telling the truth⁴at least some 1000 or 2000 Russian troops would have arrived by now to assure them.⁵They add that Ottomans can be defeated if they get troops and ammunition. Otherwise they would have no choice but to submit to the Turks...

¹AVPR, Coll. 100 (1739), file 2, f. 64.

²Text has the Persian term *qošūn*.

³Text has the Persian term *čun*.

⁴Text has the Persian term *rastī*.

⁵Text has the Persian term *kāterjam'*.

130

Ivan Karapet's Report on Karabagh(July 1724)¹

Upon returning to Karabagh I found out that Melik Bagher, who favored the Persians, had invited 47 notables from Shirvan to his house and had killed them in their sleep. Melik Esayi of Gulistan and his brothers Abraham and Sargis, who favor the Ottomans, taking advantage of our absence, convinced Melik Bagher to get rid of all the Shemakhis in order to take over their property. They captured T'arkhan Yüzbaşı² and looted the houses of the Shirvanis. On their way back they looted the houses belonging to T'arkhan followers.³ Melik Bagher attacked Avan Yüzbaşı's territory. I rescued the Shirvani prisoners, but T'arkhan refuses to fight, stating that they are after all Armenians. I am sending the son of Khach'ik to you.⁴ I shall stay here defending the region against the Turks.

131

Minas Vardapet to Luke Shirvanov⁵(27 August 1724)⁶

1-Please relate to His Majesty that the Muslims have tempted the Armenian leadership with titles and privileges, but they have resisted all attempts and have remained faithful to Russia. They await the response to their petitions...2-The Armenians have put all their faith in His Majesty's promises. They believe in His words as if they were in the Holy Bible, They wish to serve His Majesty faithfully. 4-Although His Majesty's regular troops are capable, they are not familiar with this region or its customs. Armenian volunteers, therefore, are of great use. 6-We cannot keep our cooperation from the Muslims any longer. The secret is out and they know about it. 8-Vardapet Anton and K'evkha Ch'ēlēbi are in

¹AVPR. Coll. 100 (1739), file 2, f. 59.

²A leader of the Karabagh resistance movement and an associate of Avan Yüzbaşı, see biographical notes.

³Text has the Persian term *tābe'*.

⁴Lazar Khristoforov, see doc. 138 and biographical notes.

⁵Ghukas Shirvanents' was the brother of Ivan Karapet and an important merchant in Russia, see biographical notes.

⁶Ezov, doc. 242.

Astrakhan. They have been there for six months awaiting permission to travel to St. Petersburg to present their petitions to His Majesty.¹

132

Kat'oghikos Astuatsatur to Kat'oghikos Esayi(4 September 1724)²

To Our Brother Esayi, Kat'oghikos of the Aghuank':

Your courier delivered your letters.³ I have already written to you about the conditions here. The Turkish Sultan has taken Koflan, Tiven, and Erivan. There is no place left which they have not occupied. My advice is that you should send some of your yüzbaşıs with presents to the Turkish pasha, who commands the forces in this region. May God grant the Turkish pasha a long life, for he has received all that have submitted to him with great favor. Their life is spared and they are put under his protection. Send your envoys as soon as possible and stop the arrival of Turkish troops into your region. Once they come they will destroy property and take hostages. They have treated us Christians very well and you should heed my advice and act accordingly.

133

Kat'oghikos Nersēs to Kat'oghikos Esayi(September-October 1724)⁴

To my Big Brother, Kato'ghikos Esayi:

We received your letter where you requested that we put our seal on a document. The document was not shown to us and we thus did not put our seal. The reason for this is that the seven-headed viper has arrived in Armenia and its tail has touched our domain. We are scared, for you know what they would do to us if they find out our intentions. I beg that you keep our correspondence to the Russian Tsar a secret even from your own yüzbaşıs. Whatever your or my yüzbaşıs write themselves does not concern us. Some of our armed men wish to fight, others wish to come to

¹Vardapet Anton, Vardapet Petros, and K'evkha Ch'ēlēbi wrote to Tsar Peter in August as well. They asked to be permitted to travel to St. Petersburg, *Ezov*, doc. 253, original in *AVPR*, Coll. 100 (1724), file 2, ff. 44-45.

²*Ezov*, doc. 244, original in *AVPR*, Coll. 100 (1726), file 3, f. 8.

³Text has *shatir*, from the Arab-Persian term *šāter*.

⁴*Ezov*, doc. 247, original in *AVPR*, Coll. 100 (1726), file 3, ff. 8-9.

terms with the Muslims. The Meliks of Erevan have already submitted to the Turks and it is rumored that Yüzbaşı Esayi of Ganja is planning to surrender the moment the Turks arrive, for there is no place to hide.

134

Kat'oghikoses and Meliks of Karabagh to Peter the Great(18 October 1724)¹

We, your servants, the undersigned Kat'oghikoses Esayi and Nersēs and Meliks of Aghuank' have sent three or four messages to Your Majesty. We have bowed before you with our requests but have not heard any response from Your Highness. It is some three or four years now that we do not have a ruler. We have relied instead on God and Your Majesty for protection...The Turks have taken Tabriz, Nakhichevan, Erevan, Tiflis, Borchalu, Kazakh. They have come to Ganja and are now planning to enter Karabagh. We beg that Your Majesty not forget us. Please send troops to protect us. Your forces are camped by the sea and a single order from Your Highness will bring them to Shemakhi and Karabagh, where we await them with provisions. The Turkish forces will come here within two or three months and will destroy us. We are your lowest servants. We have no one else to rely on. For the sake of Jesus Christ and the Holy Cross help us...Kat'oghikos Esayi, Melik Grigor, Yüzbaşı Bagi,² Melik Mejlum, T'arkhan Yüzbaşı, Sargis Yüzbaşı, Vahan Yüzbaşı, Avan Yüzbaşı, and Ivan Karapet.³

135

Peter the Great to the Kat'oghikos and Meliks of Karabagh(10 November 1724)⁴

To the Most Honorable Patriarch Esayi, the honorable Yüzbaşı Avan, and the faithful Armenian people:

We have received your letters via the priest Anton and K'evkha Ch'ēlēbi. We decree that you and your families are welcome to relocate to the Persian lands under our control along the Caspian Sea. You can

¹*Ibid.*, doc. 248, original in *AVPR*, Coll. 100 (1726), file 3, f. 2.

²Bagi and his group joined the Russians in 1727, see biographical notes.

³The seal of Kat'oghikos Nersēs does not appear. He is considered as an anti-patriarch in some sources and is accused of cooperating with the Muslims.

⁴*Ezov*, doc. 255, original in *AVPR*, Coll. 100 (1724), file 2, ff. 46-47.

settle anywhere you wish and are free to conduct your business and observe your Christian faith without any hindrance. You can settle in Gilan, Mazandaran, Baku, or any other place you wish. You shall receive all the necessary help the moment you arrive. To assure you, We are sending you a copy of Our Imperial Decree...¹

136

*Peter the Great to Major-General Kropotov*²

(10 November 1724)³

The Armenian people have asked Us to be their protector. We order that the Armenians of Persia be permitted to settle in and around the Fort of the Holy Cross, near the Sulakh, Agrakhan, and Terek Rivers. You are to help them find suitable land and protect them. We do not wish to hear any complaints from them. We hold the Armenian people in special favor.⁴

137

The Collegium of Foreign Affairs to Major-General Kropotov

(11 November 1724)⁵

Four Armenians have arrived in St. Petersburg with letters for His Majesty. A resident of the Karabagh Province, by the name of K'evkha Ch'ēlēbi, was among them. He verbally stated that four years ago the Lesghians took nineteen members of his family as prisoners. His daughter-in-law, Agul, is held by Aldi-Girai, the Shamkhal of Tarku. His nephew, Egan, is held in Kazanchi. His daughter Agha Khanum is held

¹On 18 December the Collegium of Foreign Affairs issued an order to escort Vardapet Anton and K'evkha Ch'ēlēbi to Astrakhan and to the Holy Cross Fort, *AVPR*, Coll. 100 (1724), file 2, ff. 128-129.

²Kropotov was the Commandant of the Fort of the Holy Cross.

³*SAAN*, I, 165-166. Similar messages were sent to General Levashov in Gilan, Colonel Ostaf'ev in Baku, Colonel Iunger in Derbent, and to General Matushkin, *Ezov*, docs. 257, 259, originals in *AVPR*, Coll. 100 (1724), file 2, ff. 63-64, 68-69. These decrees were translated into Armenian for distribution among the Armenians of Transcaucasia, see *ibid.*, f. 67.

⁴A letter detailing the Tsar's favor and protection was also sent to Kat'oghikos Esayi and Yüzbaşı Avan on the same day, *ibid.*, ff. 168-169.

⁵*AVPR*, Coll. 100 (1724), file 2, f. 87.

by the mīrzā of the Shamkhal, Moḥammad. His son Khasunjan is held by Bekir Changi Mehmet in the village of Kübeç. His son Burji is held in the village of Mügür... The Emperor has heard his pain and has ordered that his children and family members be restored to him. You are to do everything in your power to rescue them from the hands of the unbelievers...

138

General Matiushkin's Report(19 January 1725)¹

When General Levashov came to Gilan from Astrakhan (on 23 June 1723) a group of 76 Armenian cavalrymen, who had joined the Russian forces, were among his troops. Among them, were Lazar Khristoforov,² Aivaz Avramov,³ and Peter Sergeev (Gilanents').⁴ During the 1724 attack on Rasht, the *Kizilbash* killed Sergeev. Khristoforov and Avramov took over the command of the Armenians and paid for the upkeep of the horses.⁵

¹*TsGVIA*, Coll. 13, group 1/107, file 43, f. 17.

²Lazar's original name was Aghazar di Khach'ik. He was born in New Julfa in 1690 and was a member of a noted Armenian merchant family that traded with Europe via Russia. In 1723 he left his wife and children in New Julfa and with a number of Armenians from New Julfa joined the Russian forces in Gilan. He took the name of Lazar Khristoforov and together with Gilanents', formed the Armenian squadron. After the death of Petros, in 1724, he commanded the squadron until his death in 1750. The squadron numbered between 600-700 men and was maintained for some time solely by Lazar, who spent some 30,000 rubles of his own capital. In 1725, he was awarded the rank of captain. In 1727 he was elevated to the rank of major; in 1728 he became a colonel, and in June 1734 he became the first Armenian general (Major General) in the Russian army. He died in Kizliar.

³Aivaz assisted Khristoforov and perished in battle a few months.

⁴This document confirms that Gilanents' died in 1724. See biographical notes.

⁵A document dated 28 January stated that the Armenian squadron composed of 77 dragoons had fed the horses at their own expense. The squadron was given sufficient flour, buckwheat, and salt each month for the subsistence of the troops. *GAAO*, Coll. 394, group 1, file 164, f. 8.

139

Kat'oghikos Esayi and Meliks of Karabagh to Peter the Great
(10 March 1725)¹

It has been three years that we are awaiting Your Majesty's assistance. We are left without anyone. Our enemies, the Turks,² the Persians, the Daghestanis, and others have surrounded us. We have managed to fight them off up to now. We have placed our hope in God and in Your Majesty's benevolence. The Turks have already taken Tiflis, Erevan, and Nakhichevan. Many Armenians have perished and have been taken prisoner.³ Three pashas (Shahin, Salah, and 'Ali) with 4,700 troops have arrived in Karabagh. We have divided our forces and have raided them periodically. We have killed groups of 200, 300, 400, and 500 as well as two of the pashas. Salah Pasha was captured and we are holding him... We beg Your Majesty to send 1000 or 2000 soldiers. We shall bear all the costs of feeding them...⁴

Signed by Bagi, Sargis, Avan, Hovhan, Abraham, Abov, T'arkhan.⁵

¹Ezov, doc. 274, original in *AVPR*, Coll. 100 (1725), file 2, f. 1.

²Text has Romans—people of Rum, the term was occasionally used by the Persians to refer to the Ottomans, who had taken over the Eastern Roman or Byzantine Empire.

³Text has the Persian term *'asīr*.

⁴Text has the Persian terms *karj-e korāk*.

⁵The letter was written in March, some forty days after the death of Peter on 28 January 1725. The news of Peter's death had not reached Karabagh or other parts of Transcaucasia even by late summer of that year. Matiushkin forwarded the letter from Baku and it arrived in St. Petersburg on 24 June. A similar letter was sent on the same day to King Wakhtang VI, *Ezov*, doc. 275, original in *AVPR*, Coll. 100 (1725), file 2, f. 10.

III (1725-1762)¹

140

Count Golovkin to General Matiushkin (22 May 1725)²

We have sent you a number of decrees from Her Imperial Majesty³ concerning the Armenians who plan to settle in Russia. In addition, a Georgian in the service of Prince Wakhtang has covertly (via Gilan) gone to speak to the Georgians who were formerly in the service of Shah Tahmāsp [II].

If you feel that you can divert the loyalty of the Armenians and Georgians to us you should proceed to do so with kind acts. We have received a letter (copy enclosed) from Minas Vardapet in which he states that the Armenians of Gilan are ready to join our forces. You are ordered to seek all Armenians and Georgians who wish to come to our side and make every effort to provide them with funds and provisions.

141

General Matiushkin to the War Collegium (30 May 1725)⁴

The vizier of Rasht, Moḥammad 'Alī, and his troops were stationed near Lashmadan. They had built a fort by the bank of the Pasikhan River. I sent 517 regular and irregular troops against him. Upon seeing our forces the Persians abandoned the fort on 22 May and took refuge in Lashmadan. The Cossacks, Armenians, and Georgians pursued them and entered Lashmadan. A battle ensued and with God's help we defeated the infidels who proceeded to escape into the woods and to the fort near the

¹Documents in this section cover the reigns of Catherine I (1725-1727), Peter II (1727-1730), Anna (1730-1740), Ivan VI (1740-1741), Elizabeth (1741-1762), and Peter III (1762).

²*AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Persia (1725), file 3, f. 13.

³Refers to the second wife of Peter the Great, Catherine I (1725-1727), who was crowned empress in 1724 and ascended the throne with the help of Men-shikov after Peter died without naming an heir, see biographical notes.

⁴*TsGVIA*, Coll. 20, group 1/47, file 9, ff. 1-2.

Pasikhan River. We killed fifty of the enemy and captured a large amount of military supplies including, 26 horses, 3 mules, 7 bronze cannons and 830 cannon balls. One Armenian was killed and one wounded. One horse was also killed.

142

General Matiushkin to the War Collegium(23 June 1725)¹

General Matiushkin reports from Baku that after the publication of the decree of 22 April, the following Armenians and Georgians were given new ranks and salaries:

Lazar Khristoforov was elevated to the rank of captain.

Aivaz Avramov² was elevated to the rank of lieutenant.

They shall be paid according to the salary tables of ranks established in 1720.

The Georgian brothers, Daracha Elizberi and Bagatyrbek did not request a rank but shall be paid the salary equal to that of a captain and a lieutenant. The rest of the Armenian and Georgian infantrymen shall receive 15 rubles per annum.

143

*The Elders of Qabale to the Russian Emperor*³(28 October 1725)⁴

The Ottoman army⁵ has reached the province of Qabale.⁶ The Turks have taken Ganja and have humiliated the defenders of its *seghnagh*, which

¹*AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1725), file 9, f. 3.

²Prior to joining the Armenian Squadron he was known as Semen Romanov, see doc. 86. He was killed soon after this report.

³The letter was addressed to Peter the Great who had died earlier. Either the news of the death of Peter the Great had not reached Qabale or the Armenians were not aware that a woman was in charge of Russia. An earlier letter from the *kat'oghikoses* and *meliks* of Karabagh, dated 25 July 1725 was also addressed to the Great Emperor, *Ezov*, doc. 276. The letter requested Russian aid against Turkish and Persian attacks on Ganja, Karabagh, Ghap'an, Sisian, and other places.

⁴*Ezov*, doc. 280.

⁵The Persian term *qosūn* is used throughout the petition.

⁶Qabale was a district in Shirvan. It was located south of Shemakhi.

will fall any day now. After that they shall enter Shamkhor. Until they conquer that *seghnagh* they are afraid to enter Shamkhor. Once they enter, however, they shall kill us or convert us like they did the inhabitants of Shakki. They have killed our priests and burned our churches. We are in danger of losing our language and faith. The force of the sword has converted many. Most of us are Muslims by day and Christian at night. We have no other choice. We ask you, for the love of Christ, to save us. Send an army and occupy Shemakhi. We, together with the inhabitants of the *seghnagh* shall be freed. We are all prepared to serve and to obey every order of the Russian army. Our men, who speak Turkish, have gone to Ganja and have visited the Turkish army. They were permitted to walk freely in the camp. They have heard that after taking Shemakhi, the Turks plan¹ to conquer Baku and Derbent.

Barsegh, Astuatsatur, Alahvērdis, Minas, Bairam, T'oros, and Vardan.²

144

Kevkha Ch'ēlēbi's Report to the Collegium of Foreign Affairs
(17 December 1725)³

K'evkha Ch'ēlēbi reports that last year he and Vardapet Anton took letters to the Armenian *seghnaghs*. They traveled to Shemakhi with a merchant caravan. They hid there and sent a message to the Armenians of Karabagh. The messenger was killed and the message was taken to Davud Bek, the commander of Shirvan. They then decided to go to the nearest Armenian stronghold, which was Shushi. Shushi is four days' distance from Shemakhi. Armed Armenians under the command of Avan Yüzbaşı guard it. After meeting with the Armenian leaders, including the Patriarch, they returned to Derbent via Shemakhi. Rocky mountains surround the town of Shushi. The number of the armed Armenians has not been determined. There are rumors that the Armenians have defeated the Turks in a number of skirmishes in Karabagh and that the Turks have asked Davud Bek for help. Davud Bek has left for Ganja...

¹Text has the Persian term *fekr* (to think).

²On the same day, a similar letter was sent to Bishop Martiros in Derbent, AVPR, Coll. 100 (1725-1726), file 7, f. 1. Both documents abound in Persian words that had become part of the local Armenian dialect. Some of the Armenian terms also differ considerably from their traditional forms. For more details see commentary.

³*Ezov*, doc. 281.

145

General Matiushkin to the War Collegium(19 December 1725)¹

On 17 September, while in the fort of the Holy Cross² I received a petition from Paul Zinov'ev³ from Astrakhan. He has gathered 79 Georgians under his command. They have previously served with the Lesghians and now wish to serve Her Majesty in the Nizovoi Regiment in Baku and Derbent or in the Fort of the Holy Cross. They request that they be granted a salary and provisions... On 5 November, I dispatched the Armenian and his 77 volunteers⁴ to Baku. The Armenian commander is to receive 100 rubles and the rest 5 rubles per annum. The troops will also receive food and weapons.

146

Armenians of Qabale to Catherine I(6 February 1726)⁵

The Turkish soldiers have taken Ganja and may soon be able to overpower the Armenian *seghnagh* and enter Shemakhi. Fearing the Russian and Armenian defenses, however, they have refrained from entering Shemakhi. Instead they have attacked and destroyed our villages and

¹*TsGVIA*, Coll. 20, group 1/47, file 9, f. 71.

²Peter the Great reportedly supervised part of the construction of this fort, which was near the Sulak River. Work began in 1722 and was completed in 1724. From the very beginning a number of Armenian families moved there and volunteered to serve Russia. By 1733, some 450 Armenian families are reported to have resided there. For more details, see P. G. Butkov, *Materialy dlia novoi istorii Kavkaza s 1722-1803 g.* (St. Petersburg, 1869), I, 33-34, 155.

³Poghos Zenents', son of Petros was born in 1687. There is no information of his birthplace or date of his death, although he was still alive in 1751. He gathered volunteers from Astrakhan and joined Matiushkin's forces. He had two sons, Peter and Fedor. Peter served in the Siberian Corps with the rank of corporal.

⁴The exact number of volunteers is uncertain. They vary between 77 and 79 men.

⁵*AVPR*, Coll. 100 (1725-1726), file 7, f. 10. Luke Shirvanov of St. Petersburg translated the letter into Russian on 9 March. The Armenians of Qabale had written a similar letter (see doc. 143) to Peter the Great. Realizing that the monarch had passed away, they repeated their request to the new ruler of Russia.

others in Shakki. They have forcibly converted the population, burned churches and books, and have killed the clergy. We have no one to defend us and are forced to disguise our Christian faith. We beg that Your Highness send Russian troops to Shemakhi to protect us. The Turks have spread the word that they plan to take Baku and Derbent and make us all Muslims. Signed by the leaders of the six Armenian villages in the Qabale district: Parsegh and Astuatsatur from the village of Nikh; Minas and Bairam from the village of Bum; Avak and Nasib from the village of Meglur; Alahvērdis from the village of Chiurlun; T'oros from the village of Seyyedlu; and Vardan from the village of Tusik.¹

147

Resolution of the Collegium of Foreign Affairs

(14 February 1726)²

Her Majesty has ordered that the Armenian groups in Persia be protected. She has commanded that King Wakhtang [VI] and Prince General Dolgorukov must take enough troops to the Armenian *seghnaghs* to aid their resistance.

148

Catherine I to Kat'oghikoses Esayi, Nersēs, and the Armenian Meliks

(22 February 1726)³

We Catherine, by the Grace of God, Empress and Autocrat of All Russia, send Our favorable greeting to the most honest patriarchs Esayi and

¹General Matiushkin asked Archbishop Martiros of Derbent, who was ordered to leave Derbent, to deliver the letter. Apparently the *nāyeb* of Derbent, Imam Qolī, had lodged a complaint against the Armenian archbishop. It seems that the *nāyeb* had purchased a Circassian girl from an Armenian merchant for 350 rubles, with the intention of sending her as a gift to the Russian empress. The girl was not delivered but was found hiding in the basement of the merchant. The archbishop had denied seeing her, but the girl testified that he had seen her there. Matiushkin asked the archbishop to leave, for his job was to take care of his flock and not to interfere in local problems. Martiros soon returned and remained in Derbent until 1740, *AVPR*, Coll. 100 (1725-1726), file 7, f. 9.

²*Ezov*, doc. 282.

³*AVPR*, Coll. 100 (1725-1726), file 5, f. 32, also in *Ezov*, doc. 284.

Nestor (Nersēs), the honest rulers Egan and Yüzbaşı Avan, all other yüzbaşıs and leaders, and the rest of the loyal Armenian people.

We inform you that your envoy K'evkha Ch'ēlēbi came to Our court and delivered your petitions. We have viewed your requests favorably and have given leave to your messenger to convey Our favorable attitude towards you.

149

Mkhit'ar Bek¹ to Catherine I(24 March 1726)²

We the undersigned beg you on our knees to pay heed to our petition. First, the cursed Lesghians have attacked our Christian villages. They have devastated our monasteries, burned our churches and killed and enslaved our people. Second, Persian cavalry and infantry units have attacked us and have forced us to seek refuge in mountain hideouts where we have resisted their encroachments and have managed to defeat them in battle killing a large number.³ The Persians have retreated but they have burned our churches, killed the farmers, and enslaved the women and children. Third, the Turks have arrived in Jermuk. Their cavalry and infantry units have destroyed churches, monasteries, and villages. They have also killed and enslaved our people. The Turks have now surrounded our fortifications and plan to force us to surrender. With the help of God, however, we have attacked the Turks and have managed to push them out of the mountains. We have killed a large number of them but they have brought more men and have surrounded us. All roads are blocked and we cannot escape. We, the slaves of Your Majesty, ask in the name of God and that of the Virgin Mary, that you send troops to relieve us Christians from the wrath of these ungodly barbarians. We wish to spare our women and children. We have been fighting the unbelieving barbarians for four years. We hope that Your ministers and generals will inform You of our predicament and that Your Majesty, for the sake of

¹Mkhit'ar Bek, also known as Mekhit'ar Sparapet, was an associate of Davit' Bek. He was killed in 1727 in the village of Khndzoresk.

²AVPR, Coll. 100 (1726), file 4, f. 2. General Matiushkin forwarded the letter to St. Petersburg. He stated that he had received the letter from Derbent, Russian translation in ff. 3-7.

³The passage here refers to the resistance led by Davit' Bek in the Halidzor fortress.

Christians everywhere, shall provide us with the necessary aid. Written in Ghap'an. Signed and sealed by Mkhit'ar Bek, Yüzbaşı Eghiazar, Nazir, son of Eghiazar, Avt'andil Bek, Martiros, Papas, Zohrab, and Sargis, son of Balasan.¹

150

*Kat'oghikos Esayi to Prince Golitsyn*²(25 March 1726)³

For the past four years, the enemy has surrounded us, Christian Armenians. They attacked our land and enslaved us. You are aware that some brave Armenian lads gathered together and defended us against them. Hemmed in from all sides, they continue to put up a heroic resistance. They have managed to keep some of our land. They have placed all their hope on you. There is no one else. You have sent us encouragement in the past. Now is the time to help us. The Turks have taken Tiflis, Erevan, Ganja, Tabriz, and many other towns. We are the only ones left. They have intensified their campaign this spring and are now planning to attack⁴Shemakhi, Baku, and Derbent. If you deploy⁵your troops now you shall be in Shemakhi by Easter...⁶

¹Historians cite this document as proof that Davit' Bek had died before the spring of 1726. His name is absent from the letter, while that of his second in command, Mkhit'ar, appears prominently.

²Prince Michael Mikhailovich Golitsyn (1681-1764). Golitsyn was member of the War Collegium. From 1740 to 1745 he was the governor-general of Astrakhan. Between 1745 and 1748 he served as the Russian ambassador to Persia.

³Ezov, doc. 287, original in AVPR, Coll. 100 (1726), file 5, f. 2.

⁴Text has the Persian term *yūreš*.

⁵Text has the Persian term *harekat* (to move).

⁶It is interesting to note that even an educated person such as Esayi would use the common speech, as well as so many Persian words, in an official letter to a Russian dignitary. Eighteenth century Armenian, especially the language used in eastern Armenia, was a far cry from the nineteenth-century Armenian that appeared after the cultural renaissance.

151

General Dolgorukov¹ to the War Collegium(23 June 1726)²

The following are the number of irregular troops serving in the Caspian region as of 1 April 1726:

At the Holy Cross Fort

Cossacks and Kalmyks	2,772
Slobodskie Cossacks ³	1,970
Ukrainians	1,819
Bunchuk Cossacks ⁴	80
Iaik Cossacks ⁵	914

Total	6,555
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In Rasht

Georgians	74
Armenians	125
Cossack cavalry	254

Total	453
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In Baku

Georgians and Armenians	95
Don Cossacks	29

¹General field marshal Prince Vasilii Vladimirovich Dolgorukov (also known as Dolgorukii) was the commander of the Army of the Caucasus. He was the brother of Iuri V. Dolgorukov, who was the commander of the punitive division in the Don region and was killed by rebels in 1708. Vasilii defeated the rebels and beheaded 200 of them.

²*TsGVIA*, Coll. 20, group 1/47, file 9, ff. 99-100.

³The Slobodskie Cossacks were the descendants of the Ukrainian Cossacks who, as early as the 16th century, settled in the Slobodskaia region of the Ukraine. They were organized into special regiments in the second half of the 17th century and remained so until 28 July 1765, when Catherine the Great deprived them of their privileges and put them in the regular Hussar Regiments.

⁴A Cossack group which displayed the regalia of the Turkish pashas adopted by Poland and given to the *hetmans* (Cossack chiefs).

⁵The Iaik Cossacks lived by the Iaik River (Ural River after 1775). A group of them formed a regiment under its own *ataman* (*hetman*). In 1775 they were renamed the Ural Cossack Host.

	Total	124
<i>In Derbent</i>		
Georgians		90
Armenians		86
Don Cossacks		648
	Total	824

Altogether there are 7,956 irregular troops out of the 26,697 soldiers under my command.

152

General Dolgorukov's Report (30 November 1726)¹

Prince Dolgorukov reports from Rasht that the Armenians of the *seghnagh*² and their *yüzbaşıs* who have arrived there are urgently requesting that they be permitted to join the Russian forces. They are also asking that we send at least a small number of our troops to help them. The prince reports that he does not wish to antagonize the Turks and has told the Armenians to be patient and wait awhile. The Armenians, realizing that no aid is forthcoming, have put up a great struggle against the Turks. If our army joins them, the Turks, who are not strong, will be defeated. Prince Dolgorukov has tried to convince them to settle in the Persian lands under Russian control but they do not wish to do so. The main reason for this is that they do not wish to give up their property and their good lands and move to an infertile region.

153

General Dolgorukov's Report (28 February 1727)³

Prince Dolgorukov prior to his departure from Rasht reported that Armenian leaders from the region they call the *seghnagh* came to see him and requested Russian aid. They promised to be eternally loyal to Her Impe-

¹*Ezov*, doc. 289.

²The term here refers to the Armenians of Karabagh.

³*Ezov*, doc. 290.

rial Majesty. The prince has kept them by his side but has not given any promises, nor has he driven them out.

Their petition reads as follows: We the Karabagh Yüzbaşı Avan, T'arkhan, Bagi,¹ Abraham,² Egan,³ Alahvērdis,⁴ Sargis, together with Vardapet Movsēs, seek aid from Her Majesty against the Turks. They have been engaged in battles with the Turks who have not given them a moment of peace for four years. The Turks wish to convert them to Islam and to put them under their rule. The Armenians beg that Her Imperial Majesty take them under Her protection and permit the Russian army to join them. They are willing to give up their lives for Russia and are prepared to provide our troops with horses and all the necessary provisions.

154

General Dolgorukov to the Collegium of Foreign Affairs

(11 May 1727)⁵

General Dolgorukov reports from Derbent that an Armenian cavalry squadron has been formed in Rasht under the command of Major Lazar Khristoforov. The squadron, composed of 150 men, was organized by the order of Dolgorukov to serve His Majesty...Each man is paid 15 rubles per annum and is provided with provisions as well as gunpowder and lead...The Turkish Sari Mustafa Pasha with his army has taken Ganja, has surrounded the Armenians of the *seghnagh* and is trying to force them to submit to the Porte...It is obvious that the Armenian fighters are useless to us and even if some 5,000 of them would be able to join us, their maintenance would cost us more than their worth. They cannot compare to a single regiment of our infantry or dragoons. Since according to our treaty [1724] we have to maintain friendly relations with the Porte, is there any other way we can help the Armenians without endangering our relations with the Porte? The Turks are weakening by

¹Yüzbaşı Bagi was an Armenian commander in one of the *seghnaghs* of Karabagh. In 1727 he and his men went to Rasht and joined the Nizovoi Corps of the Russian army. After the formation of the Armenian squadron, he was elevated to the rank of major and served in Astrakhan, MAAC, Archives of the Kat'oghikosate, group 3, file 6, f. 34, file 20, f. 33.

²See biographical notes.

³Possibly the leader of the *seghnagh* in Dizak.

⁴Possibly the leader of the *seghnagh* in Khachen.

⁵AVPR, Coll. 100 (1725-1726), file 5, f. 58; *ibid.*, (1727), file 1, ff. 9-10.

the day and Ashraf¹ is gaining strength. We can send part of our army via the Arax and build a fort on the Kura. We can then invite the Armenians to come to our side of the river...I have therefore dispatched Yüzbaşı Bagi and K'evkha Ch'ēlēbi as their envoy to St. Petersburg to explain the situation. I request that we make it clear that we cannot break our relations with the Porte and that the Armenians must leave their strongholds and seek refuge in Russian territory...

155

Supreme Privy Council to General Dolgorukov

(15 August 1727)²

You are instructed to act in our best interest. At the present you are to convince the Armenians to continue their resistance against the Turks and not to surrender. Your report of 11 May stated that the Turks are weakening and since they have not been able to conquer the Armenian strongholds during these past years they shall not succeed in the future either. It is wise, therefore, that we continue to keep the Armenians in the region and move deeper into Persia. We have dispatched the Armenian leaders who were here to return to their land. We have instructed them to report to you prior to joining their countrymen in the *seghnaghs*.

156

Armenians of Kamenets-Podol'sk³ to Minas Vardapet

(28 October 1727)⁴

After you informed the Armenian people to resistance against the Turks and Persians, we, in 1721, dispatched Mikayēl, and after that Khojom

¹Refers to Ašraf, the Afghan ruler of Persia from 1725 to 1729.

²AVPR, Coll. 100 (1727), file 1, f. 11, also in *Ezov*, doc. 294.

³Kamenets-Podol'sk was located in Podolia near the Dniester River across the borders of the Ottoman province of Moldavia. Armenians had moved to eastern Poland in the second half of the 13th century and Kasimir the Great in 1340 had granted them special privileges to settle in Lvov and Kamenets-Podol'sk. A century later Armenians had established their own courts, and in 1616 had organized a printing press. By the 18th century Polish kings had lost their grip on the region and some of the Armenian leaders thus wished to put themselves under the protection of the Tsar.

⁴AVPR, Coll. 100 (1727-1728), file 3, ff. 1-2.

and Hakob, to inform you that our people were ready to join you and awaited His Majesty's, the Russian Emperor's, orders. We informed you of how many ships and troops the Turks had dispatched from here to Constantinople to invade Persia. In 1725 we informed you of the number of our men who were ready to go to Russia. You have not responded. We also sent Mahdesi Mkrtych¹ to secretly inform you of our preparations. He died in Nizhni [Novgorod]. We then sent three men, one of them Deacon Avak, who together with your compatriots¹ Baghdasar and Harut came to Nizhni. We then sent Sahak and Misr to you so that you would inform His Majesty of our intentions...²

157

Decree of Peter II³(1 June 1728)⁴

By the order of His Majesty Peter II, Emperor and Autocrat of All Russia the following fifteen Armenians are permitted to travel from Kiev to Moscow and present themselves to the Collegium of Foreign Affairs: Lazar, Poghos, Ivanes, Vartan, Avak, Nahapet, Vasil, Mkhitar, Vartan, Tuman, Ivan, Hakob, Ivanes, Misr, and Ohan.⁵ Timofei Saldatov, a soldier from the Kiev garrison, accompanies them. All officials and *voevodas* are instructed to facilitate their journey and not to hinder them in any way.⁶ Written by Fedor Neronov, Secretary. Sealed by Alexei Foteev, member of the chancellery.

¹The text has *hēmshēri* from the Persian *hamšahrī* (colloq. *hamšari*).

²For more details on the Polish-Armenian volunteers, see docs. 157-158.

³Grandson of Peter the Great. The 12-year old Peter II (1727-1730) was manipulated by Menshikov and the Dolgoruky family, see biographical notes.

⁴*AVPR*, Coll. 100 (1727-1728), file 3, f. 23.

⁵Armenian names appear exactly as they appear in the Russian document. For the Armenian spelling, see document 158.

⁶Travelers from Poland had to go through Kiev before entering Russia. A document dated 19 July states that Petros Khachaturov and Isak Grigor'ev from Kiev had arrived in Moscow and had petitioned to be permitted to travel to Karabagh, *AVPR*, Coll. 100 (1727-1728) file 3, f. 31. Between 3 August and 8 September sixty Armenians arrived from Poland with the intention of traveling to Karabagh-Zangezur, *ibid.*, ff. 40, 43-44. Documents dated between 1727 and 1728 contain to requests to travel to Karabagh, *ibid.*, ff. 7-14, 26, 32-33. Finally on 10 September 1728 the Collegium of Foreign Affairs headed by Chancellor

158

Minas Vardapet to the Collegium of Foreign Affairs(July 1728)¹

Twenty-three of our Armenians have left Poland and have arrived in Moscow via Kiev. They are requesting His Majesty's permission to go to the *seghnagh*. They are: Vardapet Petros, son of Khach'atur; Grigor, son of Step'an;² Hovnan, son of Hovhan; Sahak, son of Hovsēp'; Manuk, son of Sahar; Mkhit'ar, son of Harut'; Poghos, son of Avak; Ghazar, son of Abraham; T'uman, son of Israyēl; Anania, son of T'uman; Hohanēs, son of Mikayēl; Avak, son of Aziz; Vardan, son of Ēmin; Hohanēs, son of Safar; Israyēl, son of Manuk; Hovhan, son of Karapet; Nahapet, son of Hovhan; Hakob, son of Nikoghos; Sahak, son of Grigor; Vardan, son of Petros; Harut'iwn, son of Bagdasar; Harut'iwn, son of Tolukhan, and Msr, son of Avak.

159

General Rumiantsev's³ Report(24 January and 24 June 1729)⁴

Avan, the Armenian yüzbaşı came to see me. He does not possess a good mind. The Armenians give me no peace. They constantly state that Surkahi has violated the treaty and has invaded Russian territory. They insist that we dispatch our troops to the *seghnaghs*. I have delayed their requests through various excuses and they now ask to be permitted to send T'arkhan Yüzbaşı to the court of His Majesty...⁵

I do not believe that the common people will abandon their houses and property to come to Russia. They have managed to defend them-

Count Golovkin permitted the Armenians from Poland to go to the *seghnagh*, *ibid.*, f. 45.

¹AVPR, Coll. 100 (1727-1728), file 3, ff. 26-27.

²He was later known as Grigorii Stepanov, see doc. 169.

³Alexander I. Rumiantsev was, at that time, the military governor of Baku.

⁴Ezov, docs. 295, 298.

⁵In early February Avan wrote a letter to King Wakhtang of Georgia seeking his help in convincing Tsar Peter II to help the Armenian defenders of Karabagh. Avan stated that Peter the Great's promise was responsible for the Armenian resistance and that Russia had a duty to fulfill that promise. AVPR, Coll. 100 (1729-1731), file 1, ff. 4-5.

selves against the Turks. However, if they do come *en masse* to Russia we have no use for them. They shall demand food and money. They shall take the food from our own Armenian villages and will ask provisions from our Muslim villages. For the present I have provided the two *yüzbaşıs* with a salary of 150 rubles per month each plus fodder for their horses...

I have ordered that *Yüzbaşıs* Avan and T'arkhan be granted 1,000 rubles each in addition to the 150 rubles per month's income. They seem satisfied. If *Yüzbaşıs* T'arkhan requests that they be given command over the Armenian villages in our domain I shall deny it. That is because the Armenians in these villages do not wish to place themselves under their command or to fight, and shall disperse. The Armenians in Shirvan, especially those villages near Tenge,¹ pay taxes to our treasury. Both *yüzbaşıs* shall be paid the above sum and not more, otherwise they shall live above their means at the expense of the peasants...²

160

Russo-Afghan Agreement

(13 February 1729)³

Article 3. The borders between the two states shall be as follows: The region from Derbent to the Kura River and from there to the confluence of the Arax River reaching the border agreed with the Sublime Porte. All the lands in those regions reaching to the Caspian Sea shall be part of the Russian Empire... The territory of Russia in the lower Caspian littoral begins from the *rāhdārḳāne* (toll station) located on the road between Gilan and Qazvin near Zeitunrudbar to the natural boundary of Nahlebar. From Nahlebar it stretches in a straight line through the Sebdur River to Mount Maklash in the *Dalmaī mahāl* (district) near the boundary of Sardab. From Sardab it continues in a straight line through the Somam, Eshkuhar, and Temiman *mahals* to Astarabad...

¹An Armenian village located on a strategic narrow pass (hence the Persian *tenge*). The Turkish commander Davud Bek claimed that the 1724 treaty had placed it in the Ottoman side of the border. In 1727 Russia annexed it.

²On 21 May 1730 the Privy Council affirmed a salary of 1,000 rubles for T'arkhan and Avan, 300 rubles each for their assistants Melkon, Grigor, and Nersēs, and 25 rubles each for their five retainers, *Ezov*, doc. 332.

³*Iuzefovich*, pp. 190-191. General Levashov and the Afghan commander Moḥammad Saidāl Khan signed the treaty in Rasht.

161

Meliks of Karabagh to Peter II
(February 1729)¹

We have sent many petitions to Your Majesty to help us fight the Turks. T'arkhan and Avan Yüzbaşı went to Baku to seek help, while Bagi Yüzbaşı and Abraham Yüzbaşı remained in Karabagh. T'arkhan Yüzbaşı, together with Grigor Isaev, Nersēs Aghabekov, and Melkun are on their way to Your Majesty's court. We are in a terrible danger and prostrate ourselves before Your Majesty to help us...²

162

T'arkhan Yüzbaşı's Report to the Collegium of Foreign Affairs
(21 October 1729)³

Yüzbaşı T'arkhan arrived in Moscow⁴ from Persia and submitted a report via the Armenian merchant Avet Makarov:

1. The Armenians in the *seghnaghs* consist of four military units, which are under the command of six men: Avan, T'arkhan, Abraham, Uan (Egan), Bagi, and Avak. They have 30,000 armed men under their command. The rest are merchants and civilians who come and go and are not part of the defenses. The Armenians live in mountain strongholds and no one can penetrate these fortresses.
2. The Armenians have weapons, most of which are made by their own men. These consist of arquebuses, sabers, daggers, pistols, and cutlasses.
3. Their *seghnaghs* grow plenty of wheat, millet, silk, cotton, grapes, and other fruits. They have iron, copper, silver, and lead mines, which they use to manufacture arms. They are only short of gunpowder, for they do not have men who know how to make gunpowder from the minerals. They also have no cannons and ask His Majesty to supply them with cannon masters.

¹*Ezov*, doc. 296.

²Some documents state that T'arkhan traveled to Baku alone.

³*AVPR*, Coll. 100 (1729-1731), file 1, ff. 56-59, also in *Ezov*, doc. 299.

⁴Some documents state that Avan accompanied T'arkhan to Moscow and St. Petersburg.

4. They have plenty of Persian and Turkish horses of good quality. They have pastureland and possess cows, sheep and chickens. They have enough forests for firewood.
5. Although the Turks have made many attacks, the Armenians in the mountains have not paid any tribute to them. Only the Armenians living in the outlying villages that could not be protected are paying tribute and bribes to the Turks for their freedom.
6. Avan and T'arkhan Yüzbaşı ask His Majesty to honor the promises made by the late Tsar to send Russian troops, artillery and ammunition to the *seghnaghs* so that they could defeat the Turks. They promise to provide the Russian troops with meat, butter, bread, vodka (distilled from raisins or mulberries) and their horses with fodder. Five thousand Russian troops would be enough.
7. The Armenians have no wish to leave their lands and settle in Persian lands occupied by Russia. They all wish to remain or to return to the *seghnaghs*.¹

163

Firman of Sultan Ahmet III² to Ali Pasha of Shakki(June-July 1730)³

Upon receipt of this *firman* (decree) you shall join your forces to that of the commander of Ganja, our vizier Ibrahim Pasha, and move to punish and pacify the inhabitants of the *seghnaghs* in order that they shall serve our faith and us.

You are to take your religious notables, your sons, the sons of your military leaders (beks), and other heroes from Daghestan who are good warriors—no less than 1,500 men—and meet the vizier in Ganja from where you shall proceed to punish the rebels. According to Uçmi Mehmet Pasha of Kakh, there is a group of Persians who have gathered in the town of Farakhan and oppose our rule. If that is true they are to be destroyed completely. I have ordered units from Hamadan and Tabriz to assist you in this matter.

¹A similar request was sent to Dolgorukov, *AVPR*, Coll. 100 (1729-1731), file 1, ff. 67-69.

²Ottoman Sultan from 1703 to 1730.

³*AKAK*, II, 1091. Written at the end of *zihajje* 1142 H. in Constantinople.

After pacifying the inhabitants of the *seghnaghs* you are to move on to Ardebil and camp there until you hear from the *muhafiz* (commandant) of Tabriz, Mustafa Pasha...

164

Firman of Sultan Ahmet III to Ali Pasha of Shakki

(1730)¹

A scoundrel from the *seghnaghs* named Abraham [Yüzbaşı] has obtained a *firman* from the Shah of Isfahan² and has distributed copies throughout the region. Although most of the Shi'ites have doubted the authenticity of the *firman*, some of the youth have rallied around the rascal Abraham. We have ordered our vizier, Ibrahim Pasha to kill the said Abraham and his gang. We order you to take your forces and join those of our vizier.

165

Vasilii Stepanov³ to King Wakhtang VI⁴

(3 June 1730)⁵

The Georgian king is aware that at the present we cannot send Russian troops into Georgia for we must keep the peace treaty with the Turks. Such an act will nullify our agreement. Even if one of your sons returns to Georgia, the Turks may view this as provocation and cause destruction in Georgia or blame Russia. You shall recall that in 1729 when one of your sons entered Georgia with troops the Porte sent a highly placed envoy complaining that we had broken the peace...

¹AKAK, II, 1092.

²Ṭahmāsp II was reinstated as Shah in 1729.

³Member of the State Privy Council, Stepanov was one of the negotiators during the 1723 discussions with the Persian envoy in St. Petersburg.

⁴As stated, Wakhtang VI had left his domain in 1724 and had settled in Russia.

⁵AVPR, Russia's Relations with Georgia (1730), file 1, f. 5.

166

Report from an Armenian in Hamadan(June 1730)¹

On 17 June Colonel Lazar Khristoforov received a letter written in Armenian from Salmanov, an Armenian in Hamadan to his brother in Qazvin. The letter was then forwarded to our representative in Rasht.

Ṭahmāsp Qolī Khan [Nāder] arrived in Hamadan and the Turks marched out to meet him. They left half of their 23,000-man garrison in the city and faced the Persians with the other half. The Turks were defeated. Those in Hamadan fled and Ṭahmāsp Qolī Khan entered the city with his forces and billeted 30,000 or 40,000 of his troops in the houses. He took 7,000 rubles from the Armenians but did not permit the *kizilbash* to loot the town. Rumor has it that Ṭahmāsp Qolī intends to go after the Turks in Kermanshah. News has arrived, however, that the Turks have fled Kermanshah as well. They say that Ṭahmāsp Qolī Khan has now ordered his army to move on Baghdad.

167

Report of Ivan Nepliuev from Constantinople(29 July 1730)²

The Porte has sent the following communiqué: According to the treaty [of 1724] the Armenians of the *seghnaghs* are subjects of the Ottoman Empire and not Russia. Their mountain strongholds gave them a false feel of independence. We ordered Ibrahim Pasha of Ganja to attack them and in the ensuing battles a number of them have been captured. Among their possessions we found letters in Armenian to Armenians in the service of General Rumiantsev. Three Russian passports were also found on them. The passports had the insignia of the Russian Empire and were issued by the Russian State...The said documents were presented to the Russian resident with a note from the vizier inquiring if such behavior is an act of a friendly nation...

I have replied that although a number of Armenians from the *seghnaghs*, including Abraham, whose letter was produced as evidence, had come to Russia during the reign of Peter II, they had not received any financial or military aid. Russia, I added, has strictly observed the terms of

¹*AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Persia (1730), file 18, f. 69.

²*AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Turkey (1730), file 7, ff. 224-227.

the peace treaty signed with the Porte. Meanwhile, I added, the Shamkhal of Tarku, a Russian subject, has rebelled and has sent his men to the Porte seeking aid. Although the Porte has assured me that they have not given the rebels any aid, they have given room and board to Shamkhal's men, the same as we have provided for the Armenian messengers...¹

168

Lieutenant Rusevich to General Rumiantsev

(5 August 1730)²

Following Your Excellency's instructions, Major General Eropkin³ dispatched me to Ganja to meet with Kazbenchi Aga, the *Kapuçi-başı*. I left Tengi on the fifth of August, reached Shemakhi on the seventh and left for Ganja on the eighth of the month. While in Shemakhi, I heard from the Armenian merchant Vasilii and from the Tatar merchant Kalfi that the Turks had demanded 10,000 troops from Surkhai. He has replied that he did not have so many men and could only give three or four hundred. The Turks are of the opinion that Surkhai is loyal to the Shah. The *nukar* (retainer), Qorbān 'Alī, and his friends told me that they, together with three hundred men were dispatched to Karabagh to smash the Armenians. They had managed to defeat only one melik and had returned without success.

Shah Tahmāsp's twelve messengers are under guard and Ibrahim Pasha has demanded that they be sent to him in Ganja so that he could behead them. Surkhai has not obeyed so far...⁴

¹A secret memorandum of the Russian government written in that year states "Russia cannot help the Armenians without breaking the peace with the Porte. Those Armenians who choose to stay should rely on their strong fortifications. Others are encouraged to move to Russia where they shall be given salaries and provisions by Her Majesty," *Ezov*, doc. 302.

²*AVPR*, Russia's relations with Persia (1730), file 20, ff. 12-13.

³Dmitrii Eropkin was the commandant of the Holy Cross Fortress.

⁴On 19 October General Eropkin reported that the Turks are facing a number of revolts by Persians and Kurds in Azerbaijan and had asked for reinforcements from Baghdad, *AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Persia (1730), f. 20, f. 15.

169

Report of General Rumiantsev(29 August 1730)¹

On 18 August the Armenian *yüzbaşıs* from the *seghnaghs* came to Derbent. They included Abraham Chelagan, Alaverdi, Bagir, Simēon, Kirakos, Bishop Petros and their followers—altogether 137 men. Colonel Grigorii² was among them. Although they claim that the Turks had forced them to leave, I have learned that they had managed to fight off the Turks from the highlands.

The Armenian villages in the lowlands, however, were occupied by the Turks and had suffered devastation. The Armenian inhabitants of the *seghnaghs* have told the *yüzbaşıs* that they were tired of fighting the Turks. The *yüzbaşıs* then left for fear of being betrayed to the Turks by their own people. Upon arrival in Derbent they have asked to be permitted to travel to the court of Her Majesty but I have refused. They claim that they have left all their belongings behind and that their wives and children are hostages. I have provided them with food and lodging in the Armenian villages that are under the supervision of Brigadier Soimonov...³

170

Firman of Sultan Mahmut I to Ali Pasha of Shakki(March-April 1731)⁵

The inhabitants of the Ganja province, the cursed infidels⁶ of the *seghnaghs* have for some years refused to pay taxes. According to the Shari'a, we have decided to punish them. I have thus ordered that our commander at Erevan, Ibrahim Pasha, and Mahmut Pasha of Bayazid, together with the emirs of Kurdistan move on them from the direction of Gökchai (Sevan). Surkhai Khan and the leaders of Shirvan will move from the

¹AVPR, Russia's relations with Persia (1730), file 18, ff. 2-3.

²Grigorii Stepanov came from the Armenian community of Kamenets-Podol'sk in 1728 and fought in Karabagh until 1730.

³Fedor Ivanovich Soimonov was a Russian scientist who was commissioned to survey the Caspian littoral.

⁴Ottoman Sultan from 1730 to 1754.

⁵AKAK, II, 1092-1093. Written in Shawwal 1144 H. in Erzerum.

⁶Text has *gavur*.

north. Uçmi Mehmet and the Lesghians from Zahur will accompany them. They shall join the governor of Ganja, Ganj Ali Pasha and his army. Since you are one of the emirs of our court you are to join Ganj Ali Pasha the moment he calls on you. Together you shall surround the rebels and bring them to submission. If they submit and pay taxes to the treasury of Ganja, and accept leaders who are loyal to us, you are to leave them in peace. Otherwise you are to destroy their homes and restore order.

We are at present at peace with Persia and do not expect any problems from there. However, if some Persians rise against us, you are to take the appropriate measures to subdue them...

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*King Wakhtang VI to Empress Anna*¹

(September 1731)²

On 4 September news arrived from Georgia that a number of princes had risen against the Turkish Pasha³ and the ruler of Kakhet'i and had defeated them in battle. They are asking for help to drive the enemy out of our ancestral lands. Without Your Majesty's aid the region will become Muslim and You shall not receive benefits in this world or the other. I have been a loyal subject and have relied on Russia. It is now seven years that I continue to petition to save my land from the Muslims. [Prior to this] The ruler of Kakhet'i, T'eimuraz, left his grandson, Nicholas,⁴ in Russia and returned to Georgia to fight against the infidels. My uncle, Archil, left his wife and children in Russia and returned to fight the Turks and Persians as well. Had they submitted to the Persian Shah or the Turkish sultan they would have been rewarded with decorations and seats of power...I beg Your Majesty to help us retain those fortresses that have not fallen to the Turks. You are our last hope...

¹Daughter of Ivan V and niece of Peter the Great. Her reign (1730-1740) witnessed the rise of Baltic Germans (such as Biron, Ostermann, Münnich) to major posts, see biographical notes.

²*AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Georgia (1731), file 1, ff. 11-12.

³Probably Mustafa Pasha of Erzerum who had taken Tiflis earlier.

⁴He became King Erekle I of K'art'li (1688-1703).

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Russo-Persian Treaty(21 January 1732)¹

Article 2. Her Imperial Majesty of Russia desiring to give His Majesty the Shah persuasive proof of her friendship, renounces of her own generous volition the rights acquired by treaty and conquest over the provinces of Persia by her ancestors of glorious memory because of the great expenditures and preparations of war. She promises the Minister Plenipotentiary of His Majesty the Shah that one month after the signature of the present treaty she will evacuate and return to the Shah the province of Daghestan and its dependencies, all of Ranakut and the area that lies beyond the river called Sefid Rud; and five months after the conclusion of the present treaty and the exchange of ratifications, the provinces of Gilan, Astara, and other lands between Astarabad and the Kura River in the same good state in which they are under the guard of the troops of Her Imperial Majesty. The other provinces and places located on this side of the Kura [East of] will remain under the domination of Her Imperial Majesty, as they are at present, for the sole purpose of preventing the restless nations along the frontiers from joining the evil-intentioned subjects of the Shah and causing new troubles, if Her Imperial Majesty should withdraw her troops, by seizing forcibly the places now under Russian occupation...

Article 3....His Majesty the Shah will allow the subjects of her Imperial Majesty to trade freely in all the lands and places under his domination without payment of duty on merchandise brought from Russia to Persia for sale or barter. To this end the Shah will order all his officers in the cities and provinces not to exact either duty or presents [bribes] from Russian merchants...if they should wish to cross over to India or to another country in pursuit of trade, to permit them free passage by sea or by land...The said merchants are to be protected from harm, obtain true justice, and be permitted to build in suitable places houses and stores to hold their merchandise...If a ship or vessel loaded with Russian merchandise should happen to meet with accident, within Persia, those in danger will be given every assistance to save their goods. Pillage or theft is forbidden under the severest penalties. If a Russian subject should die in Persia, his

¹Hurewitz, op. cit., I, 45-47 (modified). The treaty was signed in Rasht.

effects, against receipt, will be placed in custody of his companions or relatives without anything being mislaid or withheld.

Article 4. Her Imperial Majesty promises that the subjects of the Shah coming to trade in her states or passing through her states for other lands will enjoy all freedoms and advantages that may be granted... Her Imperial Majesty also promises that when merchants of the Court of the Shah may come to Russia with proper certification that they are sent to buy goods for His Majesty, they will pay no duty for goods belonging to the Shah...

Article 7. It has also been agreed that His Majesty the Shah will not adjudge, as unfaithful subjects, those Persians who, during the invasion by Russian troops and their stay in the Persian provinces and cities, may have entered the service of or may otherwise have been employed by Russia. After the withdrawal of the Russians, they will not receive either corporal punishment or fine...

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Kat'oghikos Nersēs to Vasilii Levashov

(20 May 1732)¹

I, the slave of Christ, Patriarch of Lesser Armenia successor of St. Gregory of the Apostolic Church of Greater Armenia, wish Your Excellency God's blessing. Our man Avakum Basha (Avak Yüzbaşı) and his priest came to see me and told me that you are especially kind to our people. I ask that you do not forget to intercede on our behalf to Her Majesty and aid us against the barbarians.²

¹AVPR, Russia Relations with Persia (1733), file 3, f. 38.

²On 4 December Nersēs wrote to Levashov that Abraham Yüzbaşı, who together with a number of Armenians including Nersēs' nephew, was living among the Russian forces in the Caspian region, should receive continued support. Nersēs added that Abraham represented him and the Armenians of Karabagh, *ibid.*, f. 37. A few months later, Councilor P. Shafirov informed Nersēs that Empress Anna had no intention of abandoning the Armenians of Transcaucasia. He added that Ṭahmāsp Qolī Khan [Nāder] had declared war on the Turks and was planning to march on Baghdad or Erevan. He suggested that since Russia had a treaty with Turkey, the Armenians and other irregular forces would be given clandestine aid to take Shemakhi from Surkhai. He concluded that if the Perso-Turkish wars create unstable conditions in Karabagh, the Armenians should seek refuge in Baku or other places occupied by Russia, AVPR, Russia Relations with Persia (1733), file 3., f. 39-41.

174

Kat'oghikos Abraham¹ to Empress Anna(27 October 1732)²

To Her Imperial Majesty Anna Ioannovna (Ivanovna) from the slave of Christ, Abraham, father of all the Armenian people and Patriarch of the Araratian [Ējmiatsin] Monastery, the premier Holy See over all Armenian monasteries...It is our custom that we send Holy Chrism to Armenian communities outside Armenia. We have thus dispatched Vardapet Maghakia to the Court of Your Majesty. He shall distribute the Holy Oil and return to us. We request that Your Highness receive him and not forget to aid us in our time of trouble, which weighs on our shoulders like a huge mountain.³

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Vasilii Levashov to Count Andrei Ostermann⁴(9 December 1733)⁵

I would like to inform Your Excellency that the irregular Armenian cavalry squadron under the command of Colonel Lazar Khristoforov has repeatedly demonstrated their loyalty and usefulness to her Majesty. I, therefore, recommend that Your Excellency look upon them with special favor. I remain, your most humble servant, Vasilii Levashov, Commander of the Holy Cross Fort.⁶

¹Kat'oghikos Abraham II of Khoshab (1730-1734).

²*AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Persia (1733), file 3, f. 74.

³This document clearly demonstrates the rivalry between Ējmiatsin and Gadzasar. Kat'oghikos Esayi was dead, and Abraham hoped to reaffirm Ējmiatsin's position as the representative of the Armenians of Russia.

⁴Ostermann [Osterman in Russian] (Heinrich Johann Friederich Ostermann) was a German who entered the Russian service in 1703. He was a tutor to Peter II and a close advisor of Empress Anna. He directed Russia's foreign and domestic policy throughout the 1730s.

⁵*Ezov*, doc. 303.

⁶In March 1734 Khristoforov wrote a letter to Ostermann in which he stated that he had left his family in New Julfa and had joined the Russian forces under General Levashov and General Count Ludwig Hesse-Hamburg. He had gathered an Armenian squadron and had maintained them from his own resources. He requested that he and his colleagues be permitted to become Russian subjects, *AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1733), file 4, ff. 6-7. On 26 June 1734

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Minas Vardapet to Empress Anna(7 May 1734)¹

I have lived in Moscow for thirty-four years and during that time have been supported through the generosity of His Late Majesty, Peter I. I have not received my stipend from the Collegium of Foreign Affairs for the years 1731, 1732, and 1734. I request that Your Majesty order that I be given the funds due me. I have served Russia loyally and am in great need...²

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Avan Yüzbaşı to Count Ostermann(June 1734)³

His Majesty Peter I sent Ivan Karapet to the Armenians of the *segh-naghs*. We separated ourselves from the Persians and did not join the Turks. Rather we put our faith in Russia and defended our strongholds. Unfortunately we did not have enough weapons to fight the Turks and in 1729, I, together with five other *yüzbaşıs* left our homes and petitioned the Russian Court to join the Russian forces in Persia.⁴ Two hundred and fifty armed men came with us, 150 of who relied on me for their livelihood. I was given an annual salary of 1,200 rubles for our upkeep. The sum is not enough to take care of the current needs of our men and I request that you grant us the income from a number of villages in the Mushkur district so that we may have enough provisions. I assure you

Empress Anna elevated Khristoforov to the rank of major general with a salary of 2,096 rubles, 8 *altyns*, and 2 *den'gi*, *ibid.*, f. 10.

¹AVPR, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1735), file 4, f. 8.

²On 1 July 1735 the Collegium of Foreign Affairs ordered the Moscow assessor to pay Minas 150 rubles for 1734 as well as a total of 518 rubles for the years 1732 and 1733, *ibid.*, f. 15. On 3 July Minas requested to transfer his residence to Astrakhan, *ibid.*, f. 16. Minas did not go to Astrakhan and by 1740 he was destitute. He converted to Russian Orthodoxy in 1740 and died the same year.

³AVPR, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1733), file 4, ff. 8-9.

⁴The petition of T'arkhan and Avan to the Russian Court is in GAAO, Coll. 394, group 1, file 163, f. 32.

that when Her Majesty's benevolence will be known in other Armenians *seghnaghs*, they will also want to join the Russian forces...¹

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Russo-Persian Treaty(10 March 1735)²

Article 1. Persia promises to remain eternally an ally of Russia. Friends of Russia shall be regarded as friends of Persia and Russian enemies shall be the enemies of Persia. Anyone making war on one of these states shall be attacked by the other. The cities of Derbent and Baku will be returned to Persia provided that they shall not be handed over to any other state. Individuals who have served Russia and Her Imperial Majesty shall not be punished as traitors to Persia. The Christian Georgian monastery in Derbent shall not be destroyed and shall continue to be a center of the Christian faith. The number of monks in said monastery shall not exceed six.

Article 2. Russia shall aid Persia in the war against its enemies and shall help her regain the provinces occupied by her enemy, the Turks. Russia shall not make a separate agreement with the enemy of Persia.

Article 3. Neither side will enter into negotiations with the Turks without informing the other until the Sublime Porte voluntarily returns all the occupied Persian provinces. All future agreements between Persia and Turkey and Russia and Turkey shall have the acquiescence of the two states.

Article 4. Those articles agreed in the Treaty of Rasht, which have not been changed in this treaty, shall remain in force.

Article 5. The subjects of both states can trade freely in each other's territories. Russian merchants can unload their merchandise in any port and purchase any item without restriction...The Russian government shall

¹On 26 June the Empress ordered that Avan be given 2,000 rubles a year for the upkeep of his men. In addition he was awarded a salary of 1,200 rubles. He also received 60 rubles worth of wheat and 12 rubles of millet. T'arkhan Yüzbaşı received 1,000 rubles in cash, 24 rubles worth of wheat and 12 rubles of millet. The other yüzbaşıs received 360 rubles of cash and 24 rubles worth of wheat, *Ezov*, doc. 304.

²*Iuzefovich'*, pp. 202-207. Prince Sergei D. Golitsyn signed the treaty for Russia in Ganja.

maintain a consul at Rasht and the Persian government can have a similar envoy in Russia...¹

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General Levashov's Report

(18 May 1735)²

Rafail Parsadanbekov, son of Kuzanov,³ an Armenian from Georgia, has served in the Georgian Squadron, as part of the Nizovoi Corps since 1724. On 28 February 1727 General Dolgorukov elevated him to the rank of lieutenant in the irregular forces. On 27 May 1728 he was promoted to the rank of captain. On 3 February 1732, I made him a major and on 3 February 1734, I awarded him the rank of lieutenant colonel.

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Vasilii Levashov to the Collegium of Foreign Affairs

(3 June 1735)⁴

By the command of Her Imperial Majesty the Georgian and Armenian irregular squadrons that have served in the Persian provinces are to be dis-

¹On 23 April General Münnich, noted that Russia must have a trade representative in Rasht to protect the interest of Russian merchants. He asked Levashov or Golitsyn to present a suitable candidate, *AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Persia (1735), f. 19, ff. 4-7. On 3 May Ostermann wrote to Wakhtang VI that following the Ganja Treaty he cannot stay in Derbent and must return to Astrakhan, *ibid.*, file 21, ff. 1-2. The Russians withdrew from Transcaucasia by 1736. On 12 July, Wakhtang requested that his son Bak'ar be permitted to leave Astrakhan for Moscow, *TsGVIA*, Coll. VUA, file 46, f. 16.

²*TsGVIA*, Coll. 13, group 1/107, file 43, f. 31.

³Rafayēl Ghuzanents' was in the service of Wakhtang VI. In 1723 he formed the Georgian Squadron, composed of Armenian and Georgian volunteers. In 1724 his squadron joined the Russian army in Gilan and took part in many battles. His father, P'arsadan Bek and his brother Tali Bek (Taga, see doc. 192) were also in that squadron. Rafayēl commanded the squadron until 1745 when he was transferred to the Hussar Regiment in Russia. He died in January 1750 in St. Petersburg and is buried in the cemetery on the Vasilevskii Island. His wife, Anna and two sons, P'arsadan and Ogami Sultan, lived in St. Petersburg until 1770s, *MAAC*, doc. 5794, ff. 209-210 and *MAAC*, Archives of the Kat'oghikosate, file 4, docs. 10, 20, see biographical notes.

⁴*AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Persia (1735), file 12, f. 176.

banded. Their participation was minimal and following the signing of the treaty with Persia they are no longer needed. In order that Her Majesty's treasury is spared further expenses, the said troops can either settle at their own expense in Russia or remain subjects of Persia. More than half of them did not receive any salary and the rest shall receive provisions for four months or a full year, depending on their rank. I request that you permit Armenian and Georgian civilians and merchants who have sought refuge in the Holy Cross Fort due to the war in Persian, to temporarily remain there.

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*Empress Anna to Vasilii Levashov and Sergei Golitsyn*¹
(21 August 1735)²

Following your correspondence of 16-22 July (numbers 14, 15, 16, 39 and 40) regarding the demands of the Persian government for the return of its citizens who currently reside in the Holy Cross Fort. I order you to send all the Armenians and Georgian citizens, together with their wives and children back to where they came from. You are also required to return all merchants who are subjects of Persia back to Derbent...Our courier Michael Volzhenskii shall present you with our order.³

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Petition of Armenian and Indian Merchants to Vasilii Levashov
(3 November 1735)⁴

Our trading ancestors and we have for many years traded in Russia and have paid duty to the Astrakhan treasury for items brought over the Cas-

¹Golitsyn was Russian envoy to Persia from 1734 to 1736. He took part in the negotiations for the Treaty of Ganja, see biographical notes.

²*AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Persia (1735), file 10, f. 37.

³On 24 July Tahmāsp Khan of Derbent had written to Golitsyn demanding the return of Armenian subjects formerly of Julfa and Tiflis, *AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Persia (1735), file 20, f. 59. One hundred and seventy-five Armenian and Georgian families who had taken refuge in Kizliar did not wish to return, *ibid.*, file 16a, f. 12. By September Levashov had managed to keep only some of the Armenians, the rest, especially those with families, were returned to Persia, *ibid.*, file 12, ff. 443-445.

⁴*AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Persia, file 12, ff. 538-540.

pian Sea. After selling our goods in Astrakhan we purchased goods and returned to Persia freely. Some of our brothers continued with their goods to the north. They received special passports from Astrakhan to travel inside Russia. During the wars of 1722-1723, however, we were required to obtain two travel permits, one for entering and one for exiting...The cost and time required for these have caused us losses...We ask that you revert to the former practice [single passport]...We the undersigned represent the Armenian, Greek, Georgian, Persian, and Indian merchants:

Armenians from Julfa: Minas Iakovlev, Khachik Iakovlev, Osip Iakovlev, Manvel Kazarov, Murad Petrov, Matvei Ivanov, Iakov Davydov, Skandar Martynov, Iakov Martynov, Grigorii Petrov, Semion Grigor'ev, Panos Iakovlev, Nazar Martynov, and Manvel Petrov.

Citizens of Militene: Mohamed Jan Bogdasarov, Manvel Zorobov, Isai Nazarov, Davyd Osipov, Rutyn Kandalov, Bero Arslanov, Arutin Karakosov, Moses Mezhanov, Muhamed Zhanterov, and Melo Zorobov.

Citizens of Arakurpin: Peter Kosperv, Makar Stepanov, Ezkel Eremeev, and Arutin Kavriiliaev, an Armenian from Ganja.

Armenians from Paraker: Arutin Davydov, David Iakovlev, Avet Abreev, Arakel Ivanov, Papa Petrov, Khachik Ivanov, Kasbar Ivanov, and Sukias Buniatov.

Merchants from India: Zhodaram Chazhuev, Kesor Aryramov, Devidas Todiramov, Zhivan Niiatchandov, Virbak Mintradasov, Tovab Bulakimalov, Zhevant Sytalov, Razharam Bondrabanov, Zhodaram Nebugiev, Gul Abra Sydary'ev, Zhotaram Stanov, Sabra Sobrazhov, Isardas Chandamalov, Kapsyram Peruev, Zhasyri Fantechandov, Maniram Bandalov, Prorosram Arurmalov, Korsodas Nebagumalov, Chanty Lalaev, Zholaram Nebaguev, Kerparam Kevalram, Zheram Burarov, Lachiram Kisorae, Chandyrbak Lachiramov, Ludin Bakbuev, and Dyvani Nebaguev.¹

¹On 8 and 30 November, Levashov ordered that single passports be issued to merchants coming from Persia or India, *AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Persia (1735), file 12, ff. 541-543, and file 13, ff. 170-173.

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Lazar Khristoforov's Petition(9 February 1736)¹

In 1723 in order to demonstrate my devotion to Russia, I entered the service of His Majesty and served with distinction in the Armenian squadron in Nizovoi as captain. I was soon promoted to the rank of major and later to that of lieutenant colonel, and colonel. In 1734, because of my services I was given the rank of major general, the rank I presently possess in the Russian army. Following the peace treaty with Persia, our troops were ordered to leave Persia and the Persians have demanded that those of us who were their subjects return to Persia. I ask that you permit me to stay in Astrakhan or Kizliar, where I can continue my devoted service to Russia, which can be verified by General Levashov. I have already received my salary of 698 rubles and 75 kopeks for the year 1735. My family and I cannot return to Persia because we have fought against them in the service of Russia. If I return, the Persians will kill me and cut me to pieces...

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Collegium of Foreign Affairs to the Astrakhan Chancery(17 February 1736)²

In 1724 the Capuchin Father Jean Baptist and the Armenian Il'ia Musekh arrived in Astrakhan from Persia.³ They wished to traverse Russia and reach France and other countries. Due to conditions present at the time they were not permitted to enter Russia. The Capuchin was told to return to Derbent. Upon arriving there he decided to return to Astrakhan and stayed there. In 1726 this office gave him permission to travel to France via Archangel. The Armenian was detained in Astrakhan but was free to move about. We have now received a note from Count Ostein, the representative of the [Holy] Roman Emperor, that the Capuchin father is still

¹AVPR, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1736), file 1, ff. 6-7.

²AVPR, Russia's Relations with Persia (1739), file 3, f. 19.

³Eghia Mushegh, son of Astuatsatur, was born in 1689 near Erzerum (Garin). He was the son of a major merchant. He had become a Catholic and had traveled to Persia. In 1724 he and the Capuchin father were sent by Shah Tahmāsp II to Europe to get aid against the Afghans. He wrote a number of books and died ca. 1750-1751 (see document 218).

in Astrakhan and that the Armenian Mushekh is under guard. We order you to ascertain if the two individuals are still in Astrakhan, and if so, to immediately issue travel permits to them so that they can leave for Europe. The original of this letter was presented to Count Ostein.

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Ivan Kalushkin¹ to Count Ostermann

(29 February 1736)²

Mīr 'Alī Beg, the Shah's envoy to the Court of His Imperial Majesty has arrived here [the Moghan Steppe]. I have the honor to report that he is a wise and resourceful man. His father was the Persian *sepahsalar* (commander of the army) and his uncle was the *e'temād ol-dowle* (chief minister). The Shah has requested that I send a reliable person along with him. I have decided to appoint an Armenian, Major Filibek,³ of the Georgian squadron. He was sent here by General Levashov as his envoy to Tahmāsp Qolī Khan [Nāder] and has stayed with me. He can speak Persian and has friends in Daghestan. He can pass as an Armenian or Georgian subject of Persia...

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Petros Kasparov⁴ to Empress Anna

(February 1736)⁵

I settled in Russia in 1716. In 1722 His Imperial Majesty of Blessed memory [Peter I] took me along in his Persian campaign to Nizovoi. After His Majesty's return to Astrakhan, I was dispatched to General Levashov and served in the Armeno-Georgian squadron until 1735. Our

¹Russian envoy to Persia in the 1730s.

²*AVPR*, Russia's relations with Persia (1736) file 8, f. 175.

³Filibek Basaurov, son of Shergilov, was an Armenian in the service of King Wakhtang VI. He was sent from Tiflis to the *seghnaghs* in 1722. He and his group were among the Armenians who fought against the Turks in Erevan. In 1725 he and his 150 followers joined the Georgian Squadron. His languages enabled him to serve as an envoy and spy. He was promoted to the rank of lieutenant colonel and died in Kizliar on 14 September 1756.

⁴Petros Kasparov was an Armenian from the Crimea who joined the Armenian Squadron in 1723. He commanded the squadron after the death of Lazar Khristorporov (1750) until his death in Kizliar in 1760.

⁵*AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1736), file 1, ff. 8-9.

squadron performed great services and I was rewarded with the rank of lieutenant colonel. I have received 120 rubles as my salary for the year 1735.

During my service, I was sent to the Persians with a message from General Levashov regarding our new borders. I was arrested and tortured. They brought me to the bazaar and threatened to behead me. I escaped with five other Russian prisoners.

We fought the Persians and I was wounded in the arm. General Levashov, as well as Peter Shafirov can attest to all of this. Now the provinces and some of us are being returned to Persia.

I do not wish to be sent to Persia for they shall kill me for my past battles with them. I wish to remain in the service of the Great Russian Empire and humbly beg Your Majesty to permit me to continue to serve with my Armenian compatriots in our squadron.

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Ivan Kalushkin to the Collegium of Foreign Affairs

(7 March 1736)¹

Alaverdi Isakov, a Persian Armenian from Julfa has complained to the Shah that merchants subject to Persia have to pay duty on their goods in Astrakhan.

The Shah has instructed his envoy to Russia, Kālef, to lodge a complaint and to inform us that if we do not cease collecting dues from Persian merchants, Russian merchants entering Persia shall be taxed accordingly.

The Shah has instructed me to inform you that his merchants are not subject to taxes. I could not reject his demand to inform you.²

¹AVPR, Russia's relations with Persia (1736), file 4, f. 109. The letter was sent from the Moghan Steppe just prior to Nāder's coronation.

²The letter was addressed to I. Izmailov at the Collegium of Foreign Affairs. The 1732 treaty permitted Persian merchants working on behalf of the Shah to bring goods into Russia without the payment of duty. Isakov may have been working for the Shah.

188

Decree of the State Senate

(14 August 1736)¹

1. According to the decision of the Imperial cabinet, Armenians willing to serve Her Imperial Majesty should be permitted to do so.
2. Armenians who serve Her Majesty in Kizliar will be paid an annual salary from the Astrakhan treasury.
3. Armenians can serve on any front deemed necessary by the War Collegium.²

Armenian and Georgian officers are to be paid the same sum as officers of the Astrakhan garrison. Lieutenant Colonel Pavel Zinov'ev (Poghos Zenents') is to receive 120 rubles a year. Since Zinov'ev was paid 360 rubles a year during his duty with the Nizovoi Corps, it is decided that he be given fodder for his horses during the winter season...³

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Decree of the State Senate

(23 August 1736)⁴

The State Senate, at the request of the Commerce Collegium, has decreed that Avet Korosov from Julfa and Iakov Moltrekh, a merchant from St. Petersburg are permitted to establish and maintain at their own expense a woolen cloth factory in the Astrakhan Province between the Kozliar, Totliar, and Terek Rivers... Their product should be of such quality as to compete with foreign cloth. They must obtain the best wool from Persia, Aleppo, and other regions... They are to be exempt from all taxes and

¹*TsGVIA*, Coll. 13, group 1/107, file 49, f. 196.

²A document dated 27 January 1740 accepted two Georgian Armenians, Benjamin Akhsharumov and Otar Tumanov, to the Georgian Hussar Regiment, formed by the Georgian nobles who had left with King Wakhtang VI and had settled in Russia, *Sbornik Imperatorskogo Russkogo Istoricheskogo Obshchestva* (*Journal of the Imperial Russian Historical Society*), vol. 138, pp. 59-60.

³On 16 March 1737 Münnich wrote to the War Collegium requesting that Zenents''s salary be increased to 150 rubles, *TsGVIA*, Coll. 13, group 1/107, file 49, f. 195. On 30 October 1738 Zenents''s salary was reinstated at 360 rubles per year, *TsGVIA*, Coll. 13, group 1/107, file 49, f. 205.

⁴*PSZR*, IX, doc. 7036.

duties on imported wool for a period of fifteen years...They are to have 30 men from the local garrison to guard against thieves...

190

Vasilii Levashov to the Collegium of Foreign Affairs(4 December 1736)¹

I received the note from the Collegium dated 30 September on 15 November in Azov. The note requested that I make inquiries regarding the property of the Armenian, Afonasii Grigor'ev, who claims to have lost his goods at Astrakhan...I have found a note from the said Armenian written in 1733 to our commander in the region, Prince Hesse of Hamburg. It states that Afonasii and his Crimean partners were robbed. There was no mention of the list of items which were taken from him or the other Crimean merchants...In 1735, and not 1734, when the khan of the Crimea entered the territory of Persia with his army, I sent the said merchant to obtain information on the movements of the Crimean Tatars. He returned with information, of which I was already aware. I gave him 120 rubles for his services, anyway...In my opinion if we pay heed to such requests we shall be inundated with numerous other requests from other Armenians. I am aware of their conditions. The mountaineers, during their invasions, robbed Armenians and Crimean merchants, but there is no way to ascertain what was taken from whom. Following each war there are losses on both sides...

191

Collegium of Foreign Affairs to Vice-Governor Soimonov(December 1736)²

We have received the letter from Ivan Kalushkin delivered by his student Constantine Rum in which he details his need for funds. On 10 June we wrote the resident [Kalushkin] that he should borrow 5,000 rubles from Isfahan in exchange for a promissory note. He could not find the said sum in Isfahan.³We therefore, order that you obtain the sum from the Julfa Armenian merchants in Astrakhan, the brothers Khachik Aga and

¹*AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Persia (1736), file 17, ff. 808-810.

²*Ibid.*, file 3, ff. 95-96.

³The economic condition of the Armenian merchants of New Julfa must have deteriorated considerably following the Afghan invasion.

Minas Aga Khaldar. They shall give you a note for 5,000 rubles, which will be paid by their father Hakopjan to Kalushkin in Persia, who will probably not charge us interest. You are to collect the necessary 5,000 rubles from our resources in Astrakhan and pay the Armenians the sum so that they may prepare the necessary promissory note without delay and dispatch it to our resident in Persia...¹

192

Privy Council to the Collegium of Foreign Affairs
(1736)²

Her Majesty's cabinet at the request of the Collegium of Foreign Affairs has decreed that annual salaries be paid to the Armenians and Georgians who are presently in Kizliar and who served with the Russian forces in Persia. The individuals are:

Major-General Lazar Khristoforov: 300 rubles.

Lieutenant Colonels Peter Kasparov, Paul Zinov'ev, and Rafail Kuzanov: 120 rubles each.

Majors Filibek Basaurov and Taga Kuzanov:³ 100 rubles each.

Lieutenants Iakov Marzauf, Ivan Asaturov, David Neveesov, and Eremeiu Davydov: 40 rubles each.

Ensigns Khachatur Iakopov and Ilia Bogdanov: 24 rubles each.

Four sergeants and three corporals: 12 rubles each in cash, plus provisions and fodder.

104 common soldiers: 10 rubles each in cash, provisions, and fodder.

Three Armenian yüzbaşıs from the *seghnaghs*: 1st rank 200, 2nd rank 120, and 3rd rank 30 rubles.

¹The funds were sent in January 1737, *AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Persia (1737), file 3, f. 15. A letter dated 8 August 1737 stated that the sum was paid in Isfahan by Armenian and Indian merchants, who charged interest, *ibid*, file 7, f. 158.

²*AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Persia (1736), file 37, ff. 1-2.

³Taghpar or Talibek Ghuzanents', son of P'arsadan Bek, was an Armenian of Tiflis. Together with his younger brother, Rafayēl Ghuzanents', he served in the Georgian squadron since its formation in 1724. In 1727 he was elevated to the rank of lieutenant. In 1761 he was given the rank of colonel. For forty years he served in the Caspian and Caucasian fronts and died in Kizliar in 1765. He left a brief family history at the Armenian church of the Holy Virgin in Astrakhan, now in *MAAC*, MS. no. 5794.

To the main Armenian yüzbaşı (Avan), who has the rank of khan, and his family 200 rubles.

Total of 2,748 rubles.

193

Astrakhan Chancery to Vardapet Step'anos¹

(6 April 1737)²

By the order of Her Majesty and by the verdict of Brigadier and commandant of Astrakhan, Iunger,³ Step'anos Vardapet's petition of 22 April 1736 requesting the construction of an Armenian church in Astrakhan is hereby granted. The church will be named after the martyr, St. Gregory of Greater Armenia. The land allotted for this church is 80 *sazhen*⁴ by 50 *sazhen*...⁵

194

Luke Shirvanov⁶ to Empress Anna

(June 1737)⁷

A number of Armenian merchants have spread vile rumors against me to the Persian envoy and have made it impossible for me to send my goods to Persia. The Persian border officials and customs inspectors will confiscate my goods and kill my people. I have to trade with Persia, otherwise I shall sustain great damages. I request that Your Majesty permit me to send my merchandise in the name of Your Majesty's consul in Persia in Gilan. Thus my goods, my representatives Gaspar Bogdanov and Artem Petrov, and I shall be protected. I am prepared to pay all the neces-

¹Vardapet Step'anos Ananean.

²*AVPR*, Russia's relations with Armenia (1738), file 1, f. 3.

³Andrei Tomasovich Iunger was the Commandant of the Derbent Fort from 1722 until 1736. From 1736 to 1738 he was in charge of the Astrakhan Fort.

⁴Each *sazhen* was 2.13 meters.

⁵The church in question was the second one to be constructed in Astrakhan. In January 1738, Vardapet Step'anos asked Empress Anna to permit him to conduct services in the yet unfinished Armenian church at Astrakhan, *AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1738), file 1, f. 2.

⁶Ghukas Shirvanents', was the brother of Ivan Karapet. He was a merchant who was also actively involved in the Armenian life in Moscow and St. Petersburg, see biographical notes.

⁷*AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Persia (1737), file 19, ff. 1-2.

sary duties and if your Resident in Isfahan is ever in need of funds, I shall instruct my people in Gilan to loan him the necessary funds. Upon receiving his promissory note the funds will be paid in Astrakhan or in St. Petersburg in rubles according to the exchange rate of the time.¹

195

Semen Arapov's² Report from Rasht(3 November 1737)³

Piri, the Armenian, has informed me that the son of Surkhai⁴ had attacked eight Armenian villages in Qabale, Shakki, and Arash. He took men and women captives and killed many. His army of 10,000 had wreaked havoc in the region. When Ebrāhīm Khan⁵ was informed of the actions of the son of Surkhai, he dispatched an army of 3,000 men against Surkhai's son in Daghestan. The Persians had 100 camels with swivel cannons (*zamburak*) which are able to fire projectiles weighing more than half a pound. The Persians met the enemy 130 *versts* from Shemakhi. Surkhai's son met the Persian army and killed 400 of their men. The rest retreated.

Piri also informed me that the Persians have sent 1,000 men from Ardebil to Shemakhi, under the command of Reżā Qolī Khan of Ardebil, to join the men fighting the son of Surkhai. Piri stated that the Persians were requisitioning provisions and fodder from the villages around Javad on the Moghan Steppe. The Persian forces are estimated to be around 6,000 men. The town of Shemakhi suffers from disease. Forty people die there every day. The heat, lack of water, and the fever infects twenty people per day. The sick suffer a bloody diarrhea for five to six days and expire.

¹On 8 July 1738 the Collegium of Foreign Affairs ordered that Luke be paid 3,900 rubles in exchange for the 3,000 rubles which was received in Rasht from Gaspar Bogdanov for the Russian resident at Isfahan, *AVPR*, Russia's relations with Persia (1738), file 9, f. 35.

²Arapov was the Russian consul in Rasht during the 1730s.

³*AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Persia (1737), file 10, ff. 552-554.

⁴Surkhai's son was called Morṭaẓā 'Alī. Surkhai was a chief of the Kazi-Kumuk (Ghazi-Ghumuq). The Turks appointed him as the khan of Shirvan in 1728. He was forced out of Shirvan by Nāder in 1734 and returned to Daghestan.

⁵Nāder's brother and the *beglerbegi* of Azerbaijan.

On 30 October, an Armenian merchant from Ganja informed me that Surkhai's son had attacked eight Georgian villages near Tiflis and that he had defeated a Persian force and had killed many. The rest had retreated to Ganja.¹ He also stated that there is an epidemic in Ardebil as well, but only one or two people die each day...²

196

Semen Arapov to the Collegium of Foreign Affairs(25 February 1738)³

I received information on 16 February from Khorasan that Nāder Shah and his army have reached Qandahar... Among his troops are four hundred Armenians and Georgians...⁴ Baba Gorginov, an Armenian from Tabriz arrived and told me that Ebrāhīm Khan has gathered 3,000 kizilbash and 1,000 masons from Azerbaijan and has sent them to Qandahar. He also told me that [Armenian] inhabitants from Kars have requested that Ebrāhīm permit them to go to Ganja and other Persian towns. They fear the war with Russia⁵ and seek to escape the great taxes imposed on them by the sultan. Ebrāhīm has sent Tevekel Khan to Ganja to prepare a place for the Armenians from Kars. Nāder Shah has also ordered Ebrāhīm to go closer to the Turkish border and he has decided to go to Erevan... The conditions in Kars are chaotic and 200 Armenian households have left the region and have arrived in Erevan...

¹Persian primary sources indicate that the invasions by Morṭazā Khan took place in 1736 and that Armeno-Georgian defenders managed to keep the Lesghians out of the cities. The main Persian attack came in 1738 under the command of Ebrāhīm Khan, who was killed by the Lesghians and the Persians retreated back to the Arax River.

²The plague of 1737 also infected Erevan and Tiflis, and according to Mohammad Kāẓem killed many, *Ālam-ārāy-e Nāderī* (Tehran, 1990), p. 658.

³AVPR, Russia Relations with Persia (1738), file 10, ff. 66-68.

⁴T'eimuraz II, the father of Erekle II, was among them.

⁵The Russo-Turkish War of 1738-1739.

197

Semen Arapov to the Collegium of Foreign Affairs

(1 May 1738)¹

A trusted Armenian informant from Tabriz arrived here on 28 April and reported that while in Erevan he saw six thousand or more Arab and Kurdish households who had camped outside Erevan. They desired to become the subjects of Nāder Shah and had left Turkey for the Erevan province. These tribes have numerous sheep and goats and rumor has it that 50,000 more households are on the way. The Arabs and Kurds have brought numerous gifts, including camels, for Ebrāhīm Khan and have asked permission to live on the Armenian pasturelands...They all fear the war with Russia, for the Sultan has issued orders that everyone who can ride a horse should report to Tsargrad (Constantinople) and fight against the Russian troops. So far most have remained in their houses and have refused to go.²

198

Andrei Iunger's Report

(14 June 1738)³

Our resident, Kalushkin, sent me a letter from Isfahan on April 30th stating that he had received a report from consul Arapov in Rasht. Arapov had written that the vizier of Rasht had collected 500 rubles in duty from the goods belonging to Reza Mehdiiev, a Russian citizen and merchant from Kizliar. The reason given was that Reza was born in Shemakhi and was, hence, a subject of the Shah. Arapov has requested that we, for the time being, cancel the permits of all the Armenian and Georgian mer-

¹AVPR, Russia's Relations with Persia (1738), file 10, f. 320-322. The letter was received in St. Petersburg on 25 June.

²Many of the Kurds remained in the Erevan region and later formed a considerable part of the Muslim population, see G. Bournoutian, *The Khanate of Erevan under Qajar Rule, 1795-1828* (Costa Mesa, 1992), pp. 50-57.

³AVPR, Russia's Relations with Persia (1738), file 9, f. 50.

chants, as well as Muslim merchants traveling from Astrakhan to Persia. They should trust their goods to Russian merchants...¹

199

Report from the Commandant of Kizliar(9 September 1738)²

A resident of Kizliar, the Armenian Vasilii Popov, has returned from Tiflis. He was sent there on 27 May to gather information. He reports that the Shah has dispatched a khan, called Khanjan from Qandahar as the new governor of Tiflis. Upon arrival he gathered 1,000 Georgians to serve him and took over the villages belonging to the princes and nobles of Georgia. He has only 500 Persian troops with him, the rest have been sent away to an unknown location. Khanjan took 11,900 rubles from the citizens of Tiflis. He also took money from Armenian and Georgian priests. The Shah has taken Qandahar and has moved with his army toward India...

200

Decree of the Collegium of Foreign Affairs(30 October 1738)³

In the year 1723 by the order of His Late Majesty of Blessed Memory, Peter I, the Armenian merchant Ivan Karapet, gave up his trading activities and went to the *seghnaghs* to organize the Armenians to serve the interests of Russia. He stayed there until 1730. As a result of his being away for more than six years, he ended up owing money to a number of merchants. In 1730 the State Privy Council reduced his debts to 692 rubles...In 1735 Ivan Karapet petitioned the Collegium to cancel his debts. He also asked for a living allowance. The Collegium accepted his petition and his debts were cancelled...We now order that he be given a salary of 15 rubles per month...In addition he shall be paid 800 rubles, the total sum he would have collected from the date of his petition...

¹On 26 August the Collegium of Foreign Affairs issued an order instructing all Muslim, Armenian and Georgian merchants to trust their goods to Russian merchants, *AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Persia (1738), file 9, ff. 53-54.

²*Ibid.*, file 3, f. 273.

³*AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Persia (1738), file 5, ff. 1-3.

Signed by Münnich,¹ Vasilii Stepanov, Peter Kurbatov, Andrei Ostermann, and Artemii Volynskii.

201
Andrei Iunger's Report
(1738)²

The vessel belonging to Bogdan Nikolaev, a merchant from Astrakhan was robbed. There were 26 Armenian, Indian, and Tatar merchants on board. The following are the items lost and their value according to the Persian customs declarations:

	rubles/kopeks
Gold coins	9482.16
Gold bullion (6 pounds and 84.75 <i>zlotniks</i>)	1227.52
Pearls (large and small—weighing 6 pounds and 59.5 <i>zlotniks</i>)	2393.20
Russian coins	18.70
Pearls (9) no weight recorded	10
Two table clocks	440
Diamonds (10 unpolished—two weighing 19 carats and 8 weighing 16 carats)	2290
Rubies and Sapphires (16 unpolished—nine red ones weighing 17 carats, one white, one yellow, and 5 weighing 2 carats each, colors not noted)	131
Emeralds (50 unpolished weighing one carat each)	25
Semi-precious stones, unpolished (6942)	248.54
Rings (12—7 with rubies of various colors, one with an emerald, and 4 with other stones) ³	211
Two silver <i>qelian</i> ⁴ cups, one decorated with semi-precious stones	36

¹Kristof von Münnich (Khritofof Minikh in Russian) was the head of the War Collegium. He convinced Empress Anna to return the Caspian provinces to Persia, see biographical notes.

²*AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Persia (1738), file 7, ff. 181-184.

³Text has *lala*, a variation of *la'l* (precious stones).

⁴Waterpipe, the cup held the charcoal.

Gold-brocade fabric (50) ¹	526.50
Persian and Turkish cloth, 29 pieces, and one measuring 8 <i>arshins</i> ²	1108
One crimson coat of Bukhara wool	50
Thirteen silk garbs for men and women	270
Dresses and shirts (no number given)	1146
Sixty-four silken belts ³ (4 of them <i>zarbaft</i>)	285
Seven guns (one decorated)	59
One bow	3
Three sabers	31
One pistol	2.50
Cotton fabrics—seven pieces, one 12 <i>arshins</i>	64
Silken fabrics, 74 batches	186.5
Silken fabric, 150 <i>arshins</i>	90
Silken fabric, 2 rolls	18.25
Silken fabric, 23 batches	56.50
Steel cups (50)	5.50
Sheepskins 141—123 Shirvan and 18 Bukhara	98.50
Persian, Indian, and European dresses	149.60
One Indian cambric ⁴	4
Twenty-four gold-brocaded braids ⁵	79
Indian braided shoes ⁶	3.70
Calico and muslin—18 pieces	115.10
Indian <i>agaban</i> (4) ⁷	28
Calico (one roll and 3 pieces)	63.40
Veils (29 various types)	62.40
Three silk-embroidered quilts ⁸	18
Fine silken material	296.50
Two silver belts	60
One fine silk cloth ⁹ embroidered gold and pearls	23

¹Text has *izarbaf*, a variation of *zarbaft*.

²Each *arshin* is 71 cm.

³Text has *kurshak*.

⁴Text has *marmor*, a variation of *marmar*, a cotton fabric.

⁵The text has *kiltani*, a variation of *qeitan*.

⁶Text has *chiuni*, from *chun*, shoes made of jute or braided rope.

⁷Text has *aqabanu*; a floral patterned cambric; a pseudo-muslin from India.

⁸The text has *suzani*, a type of *golduzi*.

⁹The text has *sensene*, which is a variation of *selsele(h)* or *patehduzi*.

Twelve gold and silver chains	15
Three silver pipes	5.20
One Indian dagger	2
Fifteen half-silk cloths	29
Printed calico cloth, 3 pieces	21
Printed cloth, 15 pieces	16.20
Fifteen partial-silk Isfahan cloths ¹	15
Twenty-two silk Persian cloths ²	103
Forty-three pieces of Persian lace	78
Fourteen <i>movs</i> ²	25
139 red cotton cords ³	76.40
Three Isfahani curtains	2.40
Two rugs	6
Eighty pairs of porcelain tea cups	14
Indian <i>kamarod</i> , 2 pieces ⁴	20
Goods belonging to the Armenian merchant Stepan Maksimov—sender unknown	200
The total stolen goods are valued at	22,058.83
Armenian merchants lost	21,206.98
Indian merchants lost	574.15
Tatar merchants lost	277.70

In addition the Armenian merchant Anton Afanas'ev had sent a small pouch; what was in it is not known. Only the owner knows what was in it. The Armenian Grigor Galdarov had sent four other sacks. Other minor items of no value were also taken.⁵

¹Text has *susei*.

²*Mov* was a fabric usually woven from pure silk, but sometimes mixed with cotton. It was dyed in yellow or red and sold for 1.5 to 2.5 rubles apiece, depending on its quality and dye.

³The text has *burmet*.

⁴Possibly a belt made of linen.

⁵The document clearly indicates that Armenians still dominated that trade.

202

Decree of the Supreme Privy Council(22 January 1739)¹

Reports from the chancery of Astrakhan and the commandant of Kizliar indicate that Kabardians, other mountain peoples, as well as the Georgian, Armenian, and Tatar subjects of Persia, purchase many horses and camels in Kabarda and Small Nogay (in the Ulus of Kazyev)² and transport them to Persia. Bypassing Kizliar, they travel through Bragun, Chechnia, Aksai, and Kostik... The War Collegium has demanded that we halt the export of these animals and purchase them for our own army.

203

Collegium of Foreign Affairs to the State Senate(31 January 1739)³

We have received a report from Arapov in Gilan in which he states that he has received our order of 8 May of last year, instructing our merchants in Ganja, Shemakhi, Baku, Rasht, and Derbent not to purchase goods from Tabriz or Ganja due to the plague epidemic. Arapov has instructed them that any merchant importing items from these regions to Russia would be subjected to heavy punishment.

On 9 September Arapov wrote that he has received petitions from Russian, Persian, Armenian, and Indian merchants in Gilan. They state that they have purchased raw silk in Gilan and have kept it separate from any merchandise manufactured or purchased in Tabriz or Ganja. There are two weavers in Gilan, who specialize in twisting the silk into cords. No one else can do it well. The silk bales are then taken to Astrakhan where they are separated and dried. The merchants ask that they be permitted to bring that silk to Astrakhan. Otherwise they would suffer great losses. The merchant Bogdanov has already sent one hundred bales of such silk to Astrakhan. Arapov has requested that we send an order to the Astrakhan State chancery to permit the import of such silk...

¹AVPR, Russia's Relations with Persia (1739), file 3, ff. 64-65.

²The Nogay nomads lived in the Kuban region. In 1783 General Suvorov destroyed their homes and Russians settled the region.

³AVPR, Russia's Relations with Persia (1739), file 14, ff. 3-4.

204

Semen Arapov's Report

(15 March 1739)¹

A courier from Baku has informed me that the Lesghians had taken the town of Shabrani in February... The son of Surkhai had killed 400 Armenians and Muslims who had raised arms against him. He had also taken many prisoners from Shabrani, as well as Muskuri, which are only 50 *versts* from Ganja. The Armenians had some 100 villages in the highlands, most of them with fortified *seghnaghs*. The son of Surkhai attacked them and destroyed many of them. He took 700 men and women hostage, killed many others, and stole all their flocks. The *beglerbegi* of Tabriz, Amir Aslān Khan, has gathered 1,000 men and has moved against the Lesghians...

205

Merchandise Imported by Armenians to Astrakhan

(2 April 1739)²

The following list is a translation of the items recorded by the commandant of Gilan, Wakhtang Mirza, from Armenian subjects of Persia:

The Armenian Panos Iakovlev

Isfahani fine leather	100 bales
Isfahani morocco leather	188 pieces

The Armenian Martiros Tsatur

Raw Silk	5 bales
Isfahani morocco leather	80 rolls

The Armenian Ivanis Nazarov

Tehrani printed leather	191 rolls
Tehrani corded cotton (<i>burmet</i>)	1,485 pieces
Tehrani printed cloth (small)	865 pieces
Tehrani <i>metqal</i> ³	210 pieces

¹AVPR, Russia's Relations with Persia (1739), file 8, ff. 99-100.

²AVPR, Russia's Relations with Persia (1739), file 8, ff. 215-216

³Text has *mitkal*, a variation of *methqal* or *metqal*, which was a kind of muslin. In the 18th century *metqal* is also referred to as heavy calico.

Tehrani <i>metqal</i>	8 pieces
Kashani printed cloth	270 pieces
Isfahani printed leather	19 pieces
Mazandarani coarse calico	512 pieces
Black and gray sheepskins	300 pieces
Kashani <i>zarbaft</i> shawls	5 pieces
<i>Zarbaft</i> lace	10 pieces
Copper bars	46 <i>batmans</i>
Isfahani fine leather	46 bales
The Armenian Ivanis Tamasov	
Isfahani fine leather	20 bales
Isfahani morocco leather	198 rolls
<i>Zarbafts</i>	16 pieces
Kashani silk shawls	18 pieces
Tehrani <i>metqal</i>	31 rolls
Tehrani printed cloth (small)	20 rolls
Kashani printed cloth	7 rolls
Isfahani <i>meshin</i> ¹	55 bales
Isfahani fine leather	73 bales
<i>Burmets</i>	100 pieces
The Armenian Zakari Matrozov	
Isfahani printed cloth	982 rolls
Isfahani fine leather	18 bales
The Armenian Khachik Iakolvev	
Raw silk	5 bales
Indian shawls	180 pieces
The Armenian Artem Ivanesov	
Raw silk	6 bales
The Armenian Nazaret Manukov	
Raw silk	5 bales
The Armenian Iakubjan Ivanisov	
Raw silk	1 bale
The Armenian Marut Davydov	
Black and gray <i>karakul</i>	3,141 pieces

¹Possibly *meshki* (*meshkibaf*), an inferior silken fabric dyed black, or *mesh-mesh*, a very thin starched cloth.

Isfahani morocco leather	166 rolls
Isfahani shawls	9 batches
Calico with white borders	149 pieces
Copper bars	306 <i>batmans</i>
Incense	92 <i>batmans</i>

The Armenian Tsatur Petrov

Raw silk	2 bales
Isfahani fine leather	540 pieces
Kasahani prints	400 pieces
Mazandarani calico	200 pieces

The Armenian David Mikhailov

Black and gray <i>karakul</i>	500 pieces
Copper bars	36 <i>batmans</i>

The Armenian Khachatur Aganov

Raw silk	1 bale
Rashti <i>qanavat</i> ¹	16 pieces
Rashti <i>qanavat</i> kerchief fabric	4 rolls
Lahijani <i>qanavat</i> kerchief fabric	11 rolls
Lahijani silk shawls	20 pieces
Rashti atlas ²	8 pieces
Isfahani morocco leather	13 pieces
Rashti <i>qanavat</i>	5 pieces
Mazandarani coarse calico	400 pieces

The Armenian Nazar Melkumov

Raw silk	2 bales
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The Armenian Baba Anysov

Raw silk	1 bale
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The Armenian Tatos Artemov

Raw silk	1 bale ³
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¹The text has *kanavat*. *Qanavat* was a silk material of close texture.

²Text has *kutnei*, from the Persian *gotni* or atlas.

³A document dated 12 September 1739 lists other goods imported by Armenian merchants from Persia (mainly from Nakhichevan, Akulis and Tiflis) to Astrakhan. Among their goods were calicos from Qazvin and sheepskins from Shiraz, *AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Persia (1739), file 9, ff. 135, 138.

206

Luke Shirvanov's Petition(June 1739)¹

Your Majesty's ancestors permitted the Armenian merchants from Persia who had settled in the Russian Empire to construct a church in Astrakhan. The said edifice was built and services are conducted there regularly. Foreigners living in St. Petersburg and Moscow have been permitted to build their own churches.

In 1738 Your Highness gave me permission to permanently reside in St. Petersburg (I could not return to Persia for fear of my life) as a subject of Your Majesty. I was allowed to conduct trade all over Russia and pay the same duties as Russian merchants.

Unlike other foreigners, we Armenians do not have a church in St. Petersburg. Many Armenian merchants come to Russia for trade.

I, your lowest slave, have a stone house on the Vasilevskii Island on the third lane of the Maly Avenue. My property is large enough to accommodate a small church. I request that Your Majesty permit me to construct a small Armenian church from stone, so that we, like other foreigners, may have a place of worship. When my fellow Armenian merchants witness Your kindness more of them will visit Russia, which will benefit the treasury...²

207

The Collegium of Foreign Affairs to Commandant Iunger(29 November 1739)³

In 1735 a number of Armenians and Georgians entered the service of Her Majesty in Astrakhan and Kizliar. Among them was Yüzbaşı Bagi...Sometime later Yüzbaşı Bagi came to St. Petersburg. He is now

¹*TsGIA*, Coll. 796, group 21, file 60, ff. 2-4.

²Below the petition the inscription reads: "Permission Granted," Anna. In January 1740 the Senate affirmed the petition and in February the Holy Synod, which included the bishops of Pskov and Vologod, affixed their signatures to the petition. The change of government, however, terminated the project, see doc. 213 and commentary.

³*AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1738), file 3, f. 32.

returning to Astrakhan. We decree that he be given his previous post and salary.

208

The Collegium of Foreign Affairs to Michael Golitsyn

(20 March 1740)¹

Last year, Yüzbaşı Bagi came to St. Petersburg and on his own behalf and other Armenian yüzbaşıs requested that they be permitted to leave Kizliar and reside in Astrakhan. We ask you to ascertain if it is possible for the Armenians to live in Astrakhan. Can housing be provided for them? We need this information prior to making a decision. Münnich.²

209

Decree of the Russian Government

(17 September 1740)³

The Armenians have requested that they be permitted to construct silk factories in Astrakhan and near the fort of Kizliar to produce Persian silk, semi-silk, and cotton fabrics. His Majesty Peter the Great had given permission to Safar Vasil'ev for the creation of such silk works in 1718...We decree that the Armenian merchants Shirvanov, Bogdanov, and Makarov are permitted to erect silk factories in Astrakhan and Kizliar. They can import raw silk and cotton from Persia duty free for three years. All dyes and equipment brought from Russia or Persia for this purpose are to be free from duties. They are permitted to hire Georgian, Armenian, Persian, and Circassian laborers and pay them fair wages. No fugitives⁴ can be hired under any circumstances. Minor of-

¹*AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Persia (1740), file 3, f. 14.

²On 2 September 1742 Prince Michael Bariatinskii requested that the Collegium of Foreign Affairs provide funds for the salaries of Bagi and other Armenian yüzbaşıs who had relocated to Astrakhan, *AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1742), file 3, f. 11. On 30 January 1744 Empress Elizabeth ordered that all officers of the Armenian and Georgian squadrons be sent from Astrakhan to Kizliar, *TsGVIA*, Coll. 20, group 1/47, file 304, ff. 1-2.

³*PSZR*, XI, doc. 8242.

⁴Serfs who escaped or other criminals often went to Siberia, the southern Ukraine, or to the Caspian region.

fenses by and arguments among the workers—but not capital offenses or state crimes—can be dealt with by the factory owners...¹

210

Salary Register of the Armenian and Armeno-Georgian Squadrons
(1740)²

<i>Rank</i>	<i>Number of Men</i>	<i>Salary</i>	<i>Total</i>
Major General ³	1	300 rubles	300 rubles
Lieutenant Colonel ⁴	3	120	360
Major	1	100	100
Lieutenant	4	40	160
Ensign	1	27	27
Sergeants/Corporals	5	12	60
Infantry	93	10	930
Yüzbaşı	1	200	200
Yüzbaşı	1	120	120
Yüzbaşı	1	30	30
Avan Yüzbaşı's family		200	200
Total	112		2,487

The above served Russia during the conflict with Persia. They are in need and cannot return to their homes. They shall be paid from the As-trakhan treasury. Among them are the surviving mother and son of the chief Armenian yüzbaşı, Avan. The salary of the sergeants, corporals and infantrymen includes provisions and fodder.⁵

¹On 15 July 1742 Empress Elizabeth issued her decree permitting Luke Shirvanov to construct the above silk works, *AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1742), file 3, ff. 1-6.

²*TsGVIA*, Coll. 23, group 1/121, file 389, f. 9.

³Lazar Khristoforov.

⁴One of them was Rafail Kuzanov.

⁵In May 1742 Lazar Khristoforov traveled to St. Petersburg to petition the Empress to restore his former salary of 2096 rubles and 25 kopeks. Rafail's salary rose to 360 rubles and he was promoted to the rank of colonel. After presenting numerous documents of their past services, his petition and that of the other Armenians was granted in September of that year and their salaries were increased considerably, *TsGVIA*, Coll. 13, group 1/107, file 43, ff. 2-4, 7-13, 17-23, 78-79; also see doc. 216.

211

Empress Elizabeth¹ to the Holy Synod
(1 February 1741)²

We have ordered that upon completion of the Lutheran churches, whose construction was permitted by Count Münnich in the Ukraine, they be consecrated according to the Greco-Russian rite. The first shall be named the Church of the Holy Resurrection and the second of the Holy Virgin. We ask that the Synod inform Us immediately where in Our Realm are they currently constructing Armenian churches and on whose order.³

212

Decree of the Russian Government
(11 November 1741)⁴

Last year Her Highness of Blessed Memory, Empress Anna, decreed that the Armenian merchants of St. Petersburg, Luke Shirvanov and his partners be permitted to construct silk works in Astrakhan and Kizliar... The Senate now permits them to build vessels suitable for navigation on the Caspian Sea and the Volga River. They are permitted to use oak and pine wood from the forests belonging to the admiralty...⁵

¹Elizabeth was the daughter of Peter the Great. Her reign (1741-1762) witnessed the expulsion of the Germans from high positions. She did not favor her non-Orthodox subjects, see biographical notes.

²*TsGIA*, Coll. 796, group 22, file 651, f. 1.

³On 28 December 1741 the Holy Synod responded that Astrakhan had two churches. The first was originally made of wood and was later reconstructed in stone, upon approval by Shafirov of the Privy Council in a decree dated 9 July 1706. The second was being built from wood by the permission of the Astrakhan chancery in 1736. Empress Anna had also given permission for the building of the Armenian church in St. Petersburg (18 January) and one in Moscow (in *Kитай-город*) on 21 August 1740, following the petition of the Armenian merchant Bogdan Khristoforov and his partners, *TsGIA*, Coll. 796, group 22, file 651, f. 4.

⁴*PSZR*, XI, doc. 8469.

⁵The decree was confirmed by Elizabeth, see note in document 209.

213

Empress Elizabeth to the Holy Synod(16 January 1742)¹

After receiving your report of December 1741, We decree that all the construction permits for the Armenian churches in Moscow, St. Petersburg, as well as the wooden church in Astrakhan, be cancelled and any existing construction be halted...²

214

Count Lesi's³ Report(20 February 1742)⁴

Major-General Kinderman reports that he has received the following petition from the commander of the Georgian Hussar Regiment, Lieutenant Colonel Gurielov, as well as Quartermaster Babadar Sarkisov and Sergeant Anton Katsiev. During the 1735 war with Turkey a number of Armenian and Georgian volunteers requested to join the Georgian Hussar Regiment...By 1739 some 150 men had been recruited and had gone to Kiev. The regiment can accommodate 800 men, however and I suggest that we recruit others who have requested to join the said regiment. We have already two hundred volunteers and if we do not erect obstacles more can be recruited in Astrakhan, Kizliar and the Circassian town of Kirman where many Armenians and Georgians reside...

¹*AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1752-1760), file 1, f. 8.

²A document dated 5 April states that the Armenian bishop of Astrakhan, Step'an, went to Moscow to ask the Synod to reconsider. Meanwhile, services were still being held in the church, so the governor of Astrakhan locked the church to prevent the conducting of services. On 9 May an order arrived from the Synod signed by bishops of Suzdal and Tver to demolish the church and its foundation, *TsGIA*, Coll. 796, group 21, file 60, ff. 63-64. See commentary.

³Field Marshal Count Peter Petrovich Lesi (also Lessi or Lasi) was the commander-in-chief of the Russian forces during the Russo-Swedish War of 1741-1743.

⁴*TsGVIA*, Coll. 10, group 2/109, file 2, ff. 26-27.

215

Decree of the Holy Synod(30 June 1742)¹

The Holy Synod has ordered that the priest belonging to the Armenian faith, who is currently serving in the Georgian Regiment be expelled and not permitted to return to the regiment. The Armenians serving in this regiment should, according to the order of Her Imperial Majesty to the Holy Synod, dated 6 April 1742 and the order of 14 April to the War Collegium, be strongly and carefully coached to convert to the Orthodox faith. Those Armenian heretics² who express a desire to convert should be taken by the regimental priest to an Orthodox church and be converted.³

216

Register and Salaries of the Armenian and Armeno-Georgian Squadrons(October-November 1742)⁴

One major general: Lazar Khristoforov at 2,096 rubles and 25 kopeks.

Three lieutenant colonels: Peter Kasparov, Pavel Zinov'ev, and Rafail Parsadanov⁵ [Kuzanov], 360 rubles each, for a total of 1,080 rubles.

One major⁶ (Pilibek Shergilov) for a total of 300 rubles.

Four lieutenants (among them Iakov Mirzaov, Ivanis Tsaturov, Eremai Davydov) at 120 rubles each, for a total of 480 rubles.

One ensign (Khachatur Iakopov) at 84 rubles

¹*TsGVIA*, Coll. 10, group 2/109, file 2, f. 548.

²The text has *eres*'. The Russian Orthodox Church viewed the Armenians as monophysites.

³On 16 April 1746 the War Collegium ordered that the leaders of Armeno-Georgian squadrons, as well as the Armenian volunteers from the *seghnaghs* had to be under the command of officers from the Russian General Staff, *TsGVIA*, Coll. 20, folder 1/47, file 324, f. 16. In July of that year two Armenian and one Georgian dragoon requested retirement from their respective squadrons due to old age or ill health, see their petitions and the report of the commander of the Kizliar fort, Lt.-General Devits, *ibid.*, ff. 1-6.

⁴*TsGVIA*, Coll. 13, group 1/107, file 43, ff. 23-27.

⁵Rafail Parsadanov was stationed in Moscow and had one dragoon as his assistant.

⁶Another major, Taga Kuzanov (brother of Rafail), is mentioned as stationed in Kizliar, but no salary is indicated; also see docs. 192, 220.

Three sergeants (Turus Ivanisov, Aftandil' Mamukasov, and Shakara Kishmishev) at 17 rubles each, for a total of 51 rubles.

Two corporals (Zhiliab Musesov and Vartan Markarov) at 16 rubles each, for a total of 32 rubles.

Ninety-three regular infantry troops at 15 rubles each, for a total of 1,395 rubles.

Three yüzbaşıs, the first 1,000, the second 360, and the third 72 rubles.

The salary of the mother and son of the chief Armenian yüzbaşı (Avan) has not been determined yet.

The total number of the squadron is 112 individuals.

Total salary is 6,950 rubles and 25 kopeks

In addition the following individuals shall receive a living allowance for moving to Kizliar:

Major general, 500 rubles, lieutenant colonels 100 rubles each (Rafail Parsadanov received an additional 200 rubles for relocating to Moscow), the major 80 rubles, the yüzbaşıs (first 200, second 50, and third 10 rubles), the mother and son of the late yüzbaşı 100 rubles.

Among the regular infantry troops are:

Zurab Gorgisov, Artem Piriumov, Khachik Danilov, Mandel' Galikov, Danil Galikov, Dulu Amirzhanov, Grigorii Usepov, Zhagan Zurabov, Madat Markarov, Eghiazar Vartanov, Tangi Khurmarov, Alkhas Kiria-kosov, Tsatur Markarov, Aivas Dalikhanov, Peter Sarkisov, Keurk Gul-lasarov, Eghiazar Kiriakosov, Aganis Sarkisov, Gabriel' Eivazov, Tsarukhan Minazov, Simon Kasparov, Sisak Sarukhanov, Vartan Saha-kov, Gabriel Manukov, Turus Petrosov, Sahak Tsaturov, Avet Manatsa-kanov, Evum Mirzaov, Sagel Artemov, Menichar Epriumov, Shasar Sarkisov, Diliak Apkarov, Melkum Kasparov, Iakov Papaov, Miram Artemov, Artem Iakupov, Galust Kasparov, Galust Ivanisov, Kaspar Makartumov, Papa [Baba] Amirov, Markos Turksov, Siman Danazizov, Markar Miriumov, Mkrtich Sarukhanov, Ampartsum Manatsakanov, Is-aguli Artemov, Manaser Eprumov, Alexander Eprumov, Davyd Areke-lov, Baghdasar Mkrtichov, Mirzazhan Akopov, Artem Grigorov, Khachik Avetov, Kostiant Terguleov, Ovanis Khateov, Mkhitar Antria-sov, Grigor Vartanov, Artem Manukov, and Isakhan Pugosov.

217

Hakob Isakhanov to Empress Elizabeth(12 January 1743)¹

During the reign of Your Majesty's parent, the first Emperor, Peter Alekseevich, my brothers T'arkhan and Gulgasar, and I, were so moved by His Imperial decree to the Armenian people that we joined the Russian army and fought against the Turks and Lesghians.

In 1728 we left our *seghnaghs* and became Russian subjects. We joined the forces of General Alexander Ivanovich Rumiantsev and took part in the attack on Baku. Later we joined the army of General Levashov and settled in the Fort of the Holy Cross, by the Sulak River. At the order of Levashov we were turned to the Persian envoy, who took us back to the land of the Shah. My elder brother, T'arkhan, who managed to bribe the envoy with a huge sum, was released and returned to Russia. Gulgasar and I were taken to Shabran,² where my brother's head was cut off for his service to Russia. I managed, with the help of God; to escape to Derbent from where I boarded a Russian merchant boat bound for Astrakhan. I beg Your Majesty to permit me to rejoin the Russian army and serve in the same unit as my brother T'arkhan...³

218

Eghia Mushegh's Appeal to the Russian State(1743)⁴

In 1724 I was preparing to travel to France. The Persian Shah, Tahmāsp [II], heard of my plan and asked me to carry three letters to the Holy Roman Emperor, the King of France, and the Pope. He did not wish the messages to go through Turkey but through Christian Russia. I wrote to General Levashov in Gilan and asked permission to go to France via the Russian Empire. He agreed. I left Tabriz for Gilan. Levashov gave me written permission to travel to Astrakhan. Upon arrival in Astrakhan, I

¹*TsGVIA*, Coll. 13, group 1/107, file 43, ff. 103-104.

²A fortress town south of Derbent.

³On 13 December 1744 Elizabeth decreed that Isakhanov should be made a captain, *TsGVIA*, Coll. 13, group 1/107, file 43, f. 211. On 18 December the War Collegium ordered that he join the Armenian squadron, *ibid.*, ff. 205-206.

⁴*AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Persia (1743), file 12, f. 326-330.

was held there for three and a half months and then sent under armed guard to Moscow via the Volga. On the way I was shackled and held with criminals until we reached Moscow. On 23 December of that year I was sent to St. Petersburg. On the way Peter Kurbatov, a functionary of the Foreign Affairs Collegium, opened my baggage and took the letters written in French, Armenian, and Persian... When I arrived in St. Petersburg and was questioned by ministers Golovkin, Tolstoi, Stepanov, and Ostermann, they decided to send me back to Astrakhan. They promised to return my letters but I have not received them... I am now writing to you from Isfahan for the return of my property. This letter written in French is carried by the Jesuit Father Lenkrad and by the Russian merchant Andrei Zakhar'ev...¹

219

Luke Shirvanov's Census Affidavit(April 1744)²

Luke Il'in, son of Shirvan, the owner of the silk works located on the Vasilevskii quarter, submitted the following affidavit during the general census conducted in St. Petersburg: "I was born in Persia in the district of Julfa in Isfahan. I came to Russia in 1710 and by the grace of Her Late Majesty Anna Ivanovna, I settled in St. Petersburg. I am 59 years old and own a stone house on the Vasilevskii Island on the third lane of the Maly Prospect. The residents of the house are my three sons: Ivan Lukin, 26 years old; Il'ia Lukin, 6 years old; and Petros Lukin, 4 years old. Ivan's son, Semion Pavel Ivanov, a 2-years old, who is my grandson, also lives there. My nephew, Ivan Petrov, son of Shersatan, a 34-year old Armenian priest from Isfahan resides there as well. Other residents, all workers and serfs working in my silkworks are: Two Armenians from Gilan, Vasilii Avramov and Ivan Zakhar'ev, both 20; Mark Khristoforov, a 38-year old man purchased by my brother-in-law in 1735; Dmitrii Fedorov, son of Gromov, an 18-year old Kalmyk who was purchased by my Armenian partner, Gaspar Bogdanov, and Christened as an Armenian with the name Ivan Petrov; a Georgian from Tiflis Paul Vasil'ev, who is 36 years old; Peter Ignat'ev, son of Kopiarin, who is 14. These are the male members of my household."³

¹Some Russian documents refer to him as Il'ia Musekh, see document 184.

²*AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1744), file 1, f. 91.

³Apparently the census only counted the male members of the household.

220

Decree of Empress Elizabeth

(25 July 1744)¹

Let it be known that We recognize the loyal service of Taga Kuzanov, a member of the Georgian squadron and on the 25th day of July in the year 1744 grant him the rank of Lieutenant Colonel in the said squadron. We hope that he shall continue to serve us faithfully and carry out his duties as a good officer.

221

Register of the Irregular Forces Stationed in Kizliar

(18 January 1745)²

Major General Lazar Khristoforov has the following men in the Armenian squadron under his command at the Kizliar fort: One Lieutenant Colonel, two lieutenants, one ensign, two sergeants, two corporals, and seventy-one regular troops, for a total of 79 men.

Colonel Rafail Kuzanov commands the following men in the Georgian squadron in the same fort: Two majors, one lieutenant, one sergeant, one corporal, and 25 regular troops, for a total of 30.

There are a total of 109 men in the Armenian and Georgian squadrons.³

222

State Senate to the War Collegium

(30 January 1745)⁴

Her Majesty's Senate has ordered that all the irregular Armenian and Georgian troops stationed in Astrakhan be transferred to Kizliar. The fort there is in danger due to its close proximity to the Persian forces. Hence

¹*TsGVIA*, Coll. 13, group 1/107, file 43, f. 185.

²*Ibid.*, file 49, f. 37.

³In addition, there were three *yüzbaşıs* living in the fort, bringing the number of Armenians and Georgians to 112. They received a total of 6,950 rubles and 25 kopeks per annum in salaries and provisions, *ibid.*, f. 35.

⁴*TsGVIA*, Coll. 20, group 1, file 304, f. 2.

every high and low-ranking officers and foot soldier is to relocate to Kizliar.¹

223

Lieutenant Colonel Atlukhan to Empress Elizabeth

(4 November 1745)²

Together with other Armenian *yüzbaşıs*, I left our *seghnaghs* and joined the Russian forces during the reign of Peter the Great. Our unit fought against the Persians and served Russia loyally from 1723. In 1735 when the conquered Persian provinces were returned to Persia, we were forced to leave and, at our own expense, reached Astrakhan. In 1736 our unit was incorporated into the Armeno-Georgian squadron under the command of Major General Lazar Khristoforov. We request that Your Majesty permit us to have our own commander and unit and not be part of the Armeno-Georgian squadron...³

224

Armenian Merchants to Consul Bakunin⁴

(16 March 1746)⁵

Zakhar Davydov of Shirvan, Safar Isaikulov of [New] Julfa, Stepan Petrosov of Julfa, and Khachatur Barnev of Shirvan bow before Your Excellency and request that you provide us with travel permits so that we and our retainers can go to Astrakhan.

Zakhar Davydov's retainers are Vlas Pogosov, Sahak Allaverdiev, and Tuman Mekerdichev. His goods consist of twenty-one bales of [raw]

¹The transfers began in March, by mid-September 59 men had joined the Armeno-Georgian forces at Kizliar, *ibid.*, Coll. 13, group 1/107, file 49, f. 115, also see doc. 226.

²*TSGVIA*, Coll. 13, group 1/107, file 49, ff. 154-155.

³On 9 January 1746 Filibek Basaurov, son of Shergilov, stated that no one wished to serve under Kuzanov. He requested to be given the command of the Georgian squadron, *TsGVIA*, Coll. 13, group 1/107, file 49, ff. 160-161. On 27 March 1746 the War Collegium ordered that the squadron be commanded by both Kuzanov and Basaurov, *ibid.*, ff. 174-175.

⁴Ivan Bakunin was the Russian Consul in Rasht.

⁵*AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Persia (1746), file 11, ff. 39-40.

silk, 4 bales of printed cloth, 8 packs of copper, 4 small barrels of [dried] fruit, 20 sacks of wheat, and 1 pack of nutgall.¹

Safar Isaikulov's retainers are Poghos, Nazar, and Markos. His merchandise consists of four bales of [raw] silk, 7 bales of printed cloth, 5 packs of copper, 23 sacks of tobacco, each sack weighing 6 *shahi batmans*, for a total of 138 *batmans*, and 20 sacks of wheat.

Stepan Petrov's retainer is Zagur. His goods consist of three bales of dyed silk, 7 bales of printed cloth, 4 packs of copper, 45 bundles of cotton each weighing 10 *shahi batmans*, for a total of 450 *batmans*, 2 sacks of nutgall, and 5 sacks of wheat.

Khachatur Barnev's retainer is Anton. His goods are three bales of [raw] silk, 12 bales of printed cloth, 5 packs of copper, 2 bales of dyed silk, 20 bundles of cotton each weighing 10 *batmans*, for a total of 200 *batmans*, one barrel of nutgall, two barrels of [dried] fruit, and 20 sacks of wheat.

225

Michael Golitsyn to the Collegium of Foreign Affairs

(7 April 1746)²

Armenian merchants from Julfa currently in Astrakhan have informed me that in 1745 they sent their representative with 3,258 rubles and 10 kopeks worth of Persian money to Persia. The guard ship at the port of Yarkakh stopped the representative and the money was taken to the Astrakhan chancery. The Armenian merchants state that they had presumed that since they were free to bring cash from Persia to Russia, the same would hold true for taking cash from Russia to Persia. They were not aware that Her Majesty had forbidden the export of cash, especially Persian coins, from Russia. They are requesting that I return the sum or its equivalent in Russian money.

I request that you instruct me what to do. If I do not return their money they may complain to the Shah and I shall face difficulties on my forthcoming trip to the Persian court. In addition, Russian merchants in Persia may face the same restrictions when exporting cash.³

¹A gall from an oak of Asia Minor, *Quercus infectoria*, used chiefly to give astringency to ointments.

²*AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Persia (1746), file 3, f. 14.

³On the same day, the Astrakhan chancery informed Golitsyn that Armenian merchants were smuggling the cash and had not declared it. The chancery wrote

226

Prince Vasilii Obolenskii¹ to the War Collegium(1 May 1746)²

The following is a register of all the high and low ranking officers who arrived in Kizliar as part of the Armenian and Georgian irregular forces:

Armenian Squadron

Lieutenant Colonel Peter Kasparov
 Lieutenants Hakop Mirzaev and Hovannes Sisaturov
 Ensign Khachatur Hakopov
 Two sergeants
 One corporal
 Fifty-four dragoons
 Total sixty-one men

Georgian Squadron

Lieutenant Eremai Davydov
 One sergeant
 One corporal
 Twenty-one dragoons
 Total twenty-four men

Three Armenians from the *seghnaghs*:

Lieutenant Colonel Atlukhan Avakhanov, Major T'arkhan Isakhanov, and Captain Hakob Isakhanov³

to the Collegium of Foreign Affairs to inquire what to do with the confiscated sum, *AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Persia (1746), file 3, ff. 17-18.

¹Commandant of Kizliar from the mid-1740s to the mid-1760s.

²*TSGVIA*, Coll. 20, group 1, file 304, f. 20.

³On 28 July Tsatur Markarov, a dragoon in the Armenian squadron petitioned the Empress to permit him to quit the squadron due to his age (50) and his lame leg, *TsGVIA*, Coll. 20, group 1, file 324, f. 8. On 24 January 1747 the dragoon Davydov petitioned to retire to Tiflis. He was 52 years old and had served for 23 years, *ibid.*, f. 14.

227

Ivan Bakunin to the Collegium of Foreign Affairs

(15 June 1746)¹

The Capuchin preacher, Rudolf, who has been in Persia to convert Armenians and Georgians to papism, has requested that I grant him permission to travel to Italy via Russia. He has asked for a travel permit to Astrakhan and a letter of introduction to the governor of Astrakhan. Her Majesty has ordered that in order to stop spies from entering Russia, Persian and Indian dervishes should not be given travel permits. In my opinion Roman priests are far more dangerous. There are many Jesuits in Gilan and other parts of Persia and they have made contacts with the Persian hierarchy. There is also a Capuchin priest called Ioannis in Astrakhan who is converting Armenians and other non-believers to papism. The papists of Persia and Astrakhan correspond with each other and the letters are addressed to the "Roman Papal Mission in Astrakhan." Prior to that there were two Capuchin priests in Astrakhan who were deported on the orders of the Secret Council.² It seems that the trip to Italy is a pretext for Rudolf to carry secret instructions to the priest in Astrakhan. Some time ago a Carmelite bishop, Philip, had come from Isfahan and had asked me to grant him permission to go to Astrakhan. Upon my refusal he had returned to Isfahan. I am now faced with this new request. I cannot on my own authority deny a transit permit through Russia. I request that you inform me of your decision whether to allow Rudolf to travel on a Russian ship or through a land route via Kizliar, to Astrakhan.

228

Medical Certificate

(3 October 1746)³

Chief army surgeon Bernhardt Pundt has issued the following certificate to Major General Lazar Khristoforov, son of Arshak:

¹*AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Persia (1746), file 11, ff. 105-106.

²The Council for Criminal Investigations was formed in 1731. It answered only to the ruler. Its first director was A. Ushakov. Between 1747 and 1752 it was ran by A. I. Shuvalov. In 1752 it was transferred to Petersburg, while the Moscow office was ran by S. Saltykov. The Council was abolished in 1762.

³*TsGVIA*, Coll. 20, group 1/47, file 304, f. 26.

The Major General is 56 years old and has served Her Majesty's forces since 1723. He is suffering from gout and his hands are swollen as well. He is in great pain. I have treated him since 1743.

Issued in Astrakhan on October 3rd, 1746

Herman Bernhardt Pundt, *oberchirurger*¹

229

Petition of Fedor Fedorov

(May 1747)²

My father, an Armenian subject of the Porte, lived in Macedonia. I was born there and in the year 1739 I voluntarily joined the Turkish army. I left, came to Russia, and settled in Nizhni [Novgorod]. I was baptized there into the Greek Orthodox faith by Colonel Zotov... Since a number of my Armenian brothers are serving in the Greek Hussar Regiment, I wish with all my heart to join them and serve Her Majesty...

230

*Report of Captain Volodimer Kopytovskii*³

(27 April 1748)⁴

Imam Nazar Musagulov, a messenger from our consulate in Rasht, arrived here and reported that he had left Rasht on 4 March and had arrived in Khalkhal five days later. The chief of customs had held him there for a day, had interrogated him, and had let him go. Upon reaching Tabriz he gave his message to an Armenian who informed Amir Aslān Khan, the governor of Azerbaijan. Musagulov was held under guard and interrogated for three days. He stated that the Armenians of Rasht sent him to Tabriz. Upon his release he spent a month among the Russian merchants. Musagulov reports that Amir Aslān Khan has invaded Shemakhi and has

¹A document dated 24 February 1747, written by General Devits to the War Collegium, lists other Armenians who due to old age or sickness had petitioned to retire from the Armenian and Georgian squadrons. *TsGVIA*, Coll. 20, group 1/47, file 324, f. 1. The majority of the petitioners were given permission to retire, see *ibid.*, ff. 19-22; also see doc. 244.

²*TsGVIA*, Coll. 10, group 2/109, file 8, f. 616.

³Captain Kopytovskii, together with Assessor Cherkesov, was sent to Persia following the murder of Nāder Shah to protect Russian interests in Gilan.

⁴*AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Persia (1748), file 9, ff. 118-119.

fought a battle against the son of Hājji Ćelebi, the leader of the mountain tribes in the region. The latter was defeated and killed. Amir Aslān then defeated the army of Hājji Ćelebi as well. He then turned to the Armenian settlements and managed to take Tazak...The citizens of Erevan allied themselves with the khan of Maraghe, Aslān 'Alī, who came with Kurdish and Afshar tribesmen. Mahdī Khan, a subordinate of Amir Aslān, who was sentenced to death by the latter, also joined them. Their forces reached some 30,000 men and they took Amir Aslān Khan's treasury in Urumiye. They then advanced on Maraghe, which had only 200 troops. One hundred of these troops surrendered while the rest fled to Tabriz...On his return trip to Rasht, Musagulov met three Armenian men from Ardebil who told him that Amir Aslān's troops were deserting and that only some 1,000 Afghans were left...They added that Amir Aslān Khan had written to the Porte to send Safi Mirza¹ to him, so that he could be installed as Shah...Armenian merchants from Kars had arrived in Tabriz to sell horses. Good horses went for 100 rubles, while inferior ones sold for 30 rubles. Good mules went for 100 rubles and inferior ones for 60 rubles. Although some of these merchants returned to Turkey for fear of war, others remained in Tabriz. There is no indication of a Turkish invasion of Persia at this time...

231

Iosif El'demirov's² Report on the Situation in Georgia

(20 May 1748)³

On 22 March of 1748 I was sent from Kizliar to the city of Tiflis in Georgia. I had a message from the [Russian] commander for Prince Ereklī [Erekle] Tamurazov.⁴ Upon arrival in Tiflis on 17 April I found Erekle in his residence and delivered the message of the general...I informed the prince that Kizliar is a fortified town under the command of

¹Šafi Mīrzā, as well as Sām Mīrzā, claimed to be the surviving sons of Shah Solṭān Ḥosein. Those who had rebelled against Nāder Shah, as well as the Ottomans, supported them.

²Hovsēp', son of Eldemir, was an Armenian residing in Kizliar who was sent to Georgia to report on the political situation there.

³*TsGVIA*, Coll. 20, group 1/47, file 328 (part II), ff. 66-68.

⁴Erekle II of Kakhet'i, son of T'eimuraz II. In 1762 he became the king of united kingdom of K'art'li and Kakhet'i. See biographical notes.

Lieutenant General Devits.¹The neighboring region is peaceful and those Georgians who come to Kizliar are free to move about and return to Georgia. I spent twelve days in Tiflis and learned that Abdullah Bek,²a son of a previous Georgian king, who resided in Samshul [Samshvilde], had written to Isak Pasha of Akhaltsikhe seeking Turkish aid in attacking Tiflis. The Pasha had asked the permission of Constantinople but was informed that the Ottomans were at peace with the Persians. He then sought aid from Amir Aslān Khan, who arrived with 6,000 men. Abdullah Bek had 6,000 men of his own and with this combined force he attacked Tiflis. The Persian garrison of Tiflis was in league with the invaders. The forces of Abdullah Bek were divided into three groups. Erekle defeated the first group and the rest fled in panic. Seventeen hundred and twenty six prisoners were taken. Erekle took their arms and horses and released them. At this point Amir Aslān Khan heard that 'Ādel Shah³was advancing towards the Moghan Steppe through Mazandaran. He abandoned Georgia and took his army to the highlands of Karadagh, located in the highlands between Erevan and Ganja.⁴

A caravan arrived from Erzerum and the [Armenian] merchants informed me that the Turkish forces were not prepared to invade Georgia or Persia. The Pasha of Baghdad, Ahmet, was dead and a new commander-in-chief, Kör Chavush, had replaced him.

Abdullah Bek has returned to Samshvilde and the Persian garrison of Tiflis had submitted to Erekle, who has forgiven them. Erekle's father, T'eimuraz, is still with 'Ādel Shah and has written to his son that upon arrival in the Moghan, the Shah will let him return to Tiflis. Prince Erekle then gave me a letter for Devits and I returned to Kizliar...

¹Devits was the commander of the Kizliar fort.

²Archil, the nephew of Wakhtang VI, who had embraced Islam, was forced out of Tiflis by Erekle and had sought refuge in Samshvilde.

³The nephew of Nāder Shah, 'Alī Qolī Khan, became his successor, as 'Ādel Shah. He ruled from 1747 to 1748 when he was deposed and blinded.

⁴Karadagh is the territory along the Karadagh Mountains. It stretches from southern Zangezur to the region on the right bank (present-day Iran) of the Arax River. Russian documents of the 17th and 18th centuries refer to most of present-day Zangezur as Karadagh.

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*The Collegium of Foreign Affairs to Governor Brylkin*¹
(1748)²

Luke Shirvanov and Vasilii Makarov, Armenian residents of St. Petersburg and Moscow and their fellow merchants have complained that a large part of their merchandise from Europe, which was destined for Persia has been detained in Astrakhan. A part of their goods has reached Persia, but the rest is in Astrakhan and the delay has caused financial losses. Although we had asked that you protect our merchants and their goods during the turmoil in Persia,³ the danger has now passed. The merchants themselves are the best judges of risk and it is clear that the port of Rasht and other areas in Gilan are once again safe for travel and trade. We order that the goods be permitted for transit to Persia. The losses suffered by the merchants are not our responsibility since they had originally sought our protection. [Due to the uncertain conditions in Persia, however] the goods should go only to Rasht and not to the interior of Persia. They should be released in batches and not all at once.

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Testimony of Asatur Artem'ev
(20 May 1749)⁴

Asatur Artem'ev, an Armenian of Astrakhan, was called to the governor's chancery and was presented with two promissory notes he had given to the Persian merchant Hājji Moḥammad Šafī. The first note was for 7,000 rubles, the second in the amount of 2,000 rubles. He was asked if the promissory notes were indeed his.

The Armenian Artem'ev stated that the promissory notes were given by him to Šafī. He testified that he had promised Šafī 10,000 rubles worth of merchandise in exchange for the 9,000 rubles he had received. He added that they had agreed that he could either give 10,000 worth of merchandise or return the sum in cash with appropriate interest. Artem'ev is awaiting the goods from St. Petersburg in the amount of 10,000 rubles. If they do not arrive in time he shall present 10,000 rubles in

¹Ivan Anufrovich Brylkin was the governor of Astrakhan from 1745 to 1756.

²AVPR, Russia's Relations with Persia (1748), file 12, ff. 41-42.

³Refers to the chaos after the murder of Nāder Shah in 1747.

⁴AVPR, Russia's Relations with Persia (1749), file 11, f. 374.

cash, but no interest, to the Astrakhan treasury within six months. He is not able to give the sum any sooner than that. He is unwilling to give any interest payment to Šafi for the promissory notes state that 10,000 rubles worth of merchandise shall be given in exchange for the sum received from Šafi.¹

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Petition from the Armenians of Moscow and Astrakhan(May 1749)²

We, the Armenian residents of Moscow and Astrakhan, prostrate ourselves before Your Imperial Majesty, with the following petition:

1. By the decree of the late Tsar, His Highness Peter the Great, we voluntarily settled in Russia with our families and became Russian citizens. We now reside in Moscow and Astrakhan.
2. There is an Armenian stone church in Astrakhan, where by the decree of the Russian State, we are permitted to have religious ceremonies in the Armenian rite. We do not have, at present, an Armenian priest.
3. In 1743 an Armenian priest, Vasilii arrived from Persia from the Holy See of Ararat to gather funds for our Church in Persia. Such donations are customary and we gave money for that purpose. He was not permitted to return to Ararat. He is currently living in Astrakhan spending the money we donated for the Holy See. He is acting as our priest and his Asiatic manners are dividing the community.
4. We, the undersigned, represent two hundred individuals from Moscow and Astrakhan who request that you remove Vasilii from Astrakhan and permit us to replace him with Step'an, an Armenian priest from Moscow who for twelve years has served the Georgian King Wakhtang VI. We request that Vasilii be sent back to Persia whence he came from. Parsadan, son of Andon, Gaspar Makarov, Petros Danilov, Ivan Arakelov, Midri Ivanisov, Mikail Ovanesov, Virap Matevosov, Nikolai Ivanov, Vasilii Makarov, Ivan Mirzakanov.³

¹On 4 July 1749 governor Brylkin reported that Artem'ev had made arrangements for the payment, *ibid.*, ff. 480-481.

²*AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Persia (1749), file 14, ff. 3-4.

³On 11 July 1749 Vardapet Step'an was permitted to go to Astrakhan, *ibid.*, file 10, ff. 38-40. On 29 November Brylkin reported that Vasilii (Armenian

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*Petition of Artemii Lazarev*¹(August 1749)²

Artemii Nazarovich (Lazarev), an Armenian from the Julfa Company, together with his partners prostrate themselves before Her Majesty and state that according to the decrees issued by Your Majesty's predecessors, the Emperor Peter the Great and the Empress Catherine, in 1720 and 1725, as well as various agreements which are known to the Collegium of Foreign Affairs, the Armenian merchants from Persia have had the right to sell silk and other Persian goods in Russia. We have been allowed to take our goods to Europe via Russia and bring European goods to Persia using Russian routes. For this privilege we were required to pay the necessary tariffs and duties.

We have been conducting such trade for many years without any hindrance and have enriched the treasury of Your Majesty. Turmoil in Persia has occasionally forced us to keep our European goods in Russia, primarily in Astrakhan. Such storage has caused losses... We have been trading largely with Holland. Although we have managed to sell some of the European merchandise to Russian merchants in Astrakhan, the Astrakhan customs have demanded that we pay the export duties on these items—as if we had shipped them to Persia... We request, therefore, that you permit us to sell the European goods destined for Persia in the Orenburg Province. We shall pay the necessary duty, demanded by the 1720 decree, to the Orenburg treasury. We beg that you order the Astrakhan government to release our goods, which were destined for Persia...³

name Parsegh) had returned to Persia and Step'an had assumed the role of pastor, *AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1749), file 1, f. 7. See doc. 237.

¹Aghazar, son of Nazaret'. He arrived in Russia in the 1740s and founded the famous Lazarev family, who became the leaders of the Armenian community of Russia under Catherine the Great and played a major role in the Russian annexation of eastern Armenia in the 19th century. See biographical notes.

²*AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1749), file 3, ff. 1-4.

³On 22 November of 1749 the government ordered the goods released for sale in the Orenburg Province, *AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1749) file 3, f. 5. On 17 December the Collegium of Foreign Affairs led by Count Alexei Bestuzhev-Riumin and Count Michael Vorontsov, ordered the Astrakhan chancery to pay special attention to the Armenian merchants from Julfa and to protect them and their goods, *AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Persia (1749), file

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Commandant Devits to the Collegium of Foreign Affairs(7 September 1749)¹

A number of Armenians and Georgians have arrived from various mountain regions under our control. They state that the mountain tribesmen have forcibly taken them from their homes in Georgia and that they have children, wives, or parents in Georgia... Your previous order stated that Armenians and Georgians could reside in Astrakhan, Kizliar, or any other place they desired... In addition, I have received a report from the fort of St. Anne in which Brylkin states that a Georgian by the name of Pavel Borisov and three of his friends, have arrived in Taganrog. They claim to have escaped from the Turks who had held them captive. After ascertaining that they are not spies, Brylkin wishes to issue them travel permits for Astrakhan, as has been the case with previous Christian prisoners. There are currently some 60 Armenian and Georgian men and women who live in Kizliar and who earn their livelihood by working for others, for there is not enough land for farming in Kizliar. Shall I keep them here or can they go wherever they wish to?

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*Armenians of Astrakhan to Kat'oghikos Ghazar*²(29 September 1749)³

To the father of our people, the thrice blessed, and chosen by the Holy Spirit, Kat'oghikos Ghazar.

We, your servants in Astrakhan, bow before your holy throne.

10, ff. 54-55. On 4 December 1750 the Astrakhan chancery reported that Armenian merchants were selling their goods in Orenburg, *AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Persia (1750), file 6, ff. 534-535.

¹*AVPR*, Russia's relations with Persia (1749), file 13, f. 76.

²Ghazar I of Jahuk (1737-1751). Ghazar was not the choice of the Armenian hierarchy of Constantinople. Some Armenian sources portray him as a tyrannical patriarch. After the death of Nāder Shah, he was deposed, with the acquiescence of 'Ādel Shah, by the members of the Ējmiatsin brotherhood and was forced to live for several months in Sevan. He was reinstated by Ebrāhīm Shah in 1748.

³*MAAC*, Archives of the Kat'oghikosate, file 243, doc. 11.

We thank God that you have been released from the dark dungeon.¹ We have received your messages from Tabriz in September 1747 and from the Holy See in January 1749...

In December of 1747 we sent you a letter via Vardapet Sargis of Tiflis in which we complained about the behavior of Vardapet Parsegh.² We have waited a long time to hear from you, hoping that you would ease the suffering of our people living in Russia. Vardapet Parsegh is evil. He is not afraid of God and does not pay heed to the people. He has collected funds under false pretenses, has gathered a group of followers, and has acted against our holy laws. He has even fabricated a *kon-dak*,³ supposedly sent by you from Ējmiatsin in 1746... Since 1743 he has taken all the funds donated by our people and we have no idea what has happened to that money. We await your order to recall him and to judge him at Ējmiatsin. He took 200 *tomāns* from Avt'andil, son of Mandenunts, and gave him a promissory note (*barāt*), the sum (*mablaq*) to be repaid by collections from the Armenians of Kizliar...⁴ Following our petition, Vardapet Step'an has been sent from Moscow by Imperial decree to be our pastor...

Galust, son of Buniat, Esayi Dawit', son of Grigor, Sargis, son of Hovhannēs, Poghos, son of Karapet, Mesrak, son of Daniēl, Aghasi son of Dawit', Murad, son of Poghos, Tevan, son of Sargis, Amir, son of Azar, Ezets, Martiros, Mikayēl, Sukias, Baghdasar, Gaspar, son of Baghdasar, Hovsēp', son of Khajak, Eghiazar, son of Grigor, Lala, son of Grigor, Samvel, son of Rustam, Murad, son of Muka, Petros, son of Panos, Mani, son of Hovsēp', Sahak, son of Halav, Mkrtich', son of Petros, Ghazar, son of Sargis, Hovhannes, son of Baba, Bairam, son of Nazar, Eghiazar, son of Maliz, Lala, son of Hovhannēs, Kirakos, son of

¹In 1742 Nāder Shah demanded 24,000 *tomans* from Ējmiatsin. Unable to pay such a huge sum, the kat'oghikos traveled (in 1744-1745) to Mashhad to seek an audience with Nāder Shah. The latter kept Ghazar as an honored prisoner. After Nāder's death his grandson Shahroḡ visited Erevan and following petitions by bishops at Ējmiatsin released the kat'oghikos who arrived in the Holy See in 1748.

²He is the Vardapet Vasilii who left Russia in November, see doc. 234.

³A bull or official correspondence from the kat'oghikos.

⁴The document, some 20 pages long, is full of Persian words (such as *mablaq*, *hesāb*, *barāt*, *ḡarīb*, *mosāfer*, *ṭarīq*, *ṣafeqat*, *'arz*) written in Armenian script, indicating the Persian origin of the Armenian merchants in Astrakhan.

Melkum, Khach'ik, son of Hakobjan, Pasov, son of Grigor, Khach'atur, son of Melkum, Gabriyēl, son of Vlas.

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*Report of Semen Kiriaev*¹(21 December 1749)²

Two weeks prior to my arrival in Baku, Panāh Khan Ĵavānšīr,³ Shahvardī Khan of Ganja,⁴ Hājjī Čelebī Khan of Shakki,⁵ Āqā Moqlī of Qabāle, and Safar 'Alī of Moghan gathered in Shemakhi and agreed to attack Georgia. Panāh Khan also sent 4,000 of his troops under the command of his brother and son to attack Erevan and the Armenian monastery, which they call Üç-Kilisa.⁶ The invaders grabbed the flocks of the Armenians of Erevan. The Armenians asked the Georgian prince Erekle to help them. He send his army and they killed many of the Muslim invaders. He then send a message to Hājjī Čelebī stating that he still honored his peace treaty with the ruler of Shakki. However, if the latter wished to break the peace, Erekle would attack his domain. After a council, the khans decided to make peace with Erekle. Panāh Khan withdrew the remaining of his troops from Erevan and the Georgian prince withdrew his forces...

¹Semen Kiriaev was sent to Baku by Devits under the pretext of aiding Russian merchants, but in reality to report on the conditions in Persia following the death of Nāder Shah.

²AVPR, Russia's Relations with Persia (1749), file 13, f. 132.

³Panāh Khan was from the tribe of Ĵavānšīr, a part of the Otuz-iki Confederation. He served Nāder Shah, probably as a hostage, and in 1738 escaped from Khorasan to Karabagh where he hid among family and friends. After the death of Nāder he proclaimed himself the Khan of Karabagh. He fought the Armenian meliks of Karabagh and became a force in Transcaucasia until 1760, when his son, Ebrāhīm Khan, succeeded him. For more details see, G. Bournoutian, *A History of Qarabagh* (Costa Mesa, 1994).

⁴Shahvardi Khan was a member of the Ziadoglu Qajars. His family was appointed as governors of Ganja by the early Safavids and remained in power until the Russian conquest of Ganja in 1804.

⁵Hājjī Čelebī Khan was the ruler of Shakki and Shirvan and was a rival of Panāh Khan for the domination of eastern Transcaucasia.

⁶"Three Churches," was the Turko-Persian term for the Holy See of Ējmiatsin.

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Ivan Pigaldin to Commandant Devits

(13 May 1750)¹

Upon arrival in Derbent I heard that after Panāh Khan had taken Ganja, Prince Erekle of Georgia had arrived with his army and had defeated Panāh Khan. He had killed 2,000 of Panāh Khan's troops and had taken 14,000 prisoners and much livestock. Erevan, Nakhichevan, and Karabagh have submitted to Erekle. The inhabitants of Tabriz have also accepted his authority.

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Report of Ivan Brylkin

(23 May 1750)²

The Armenian merchants Ivan Makarov of Astrakhan, Luke Shirvanov of St. Petersburg, Vasili Makarov of Moscow, and David Grigor'ev of Astrakhan have been permitted by the Collegium of Foreign Affairs to sell up to 3,000 *chetverts*³ of wheat flour in Persia upon paying the customary dues to the State treasury. They can transport and sell the said flour in any Persian port... The order states that they are to be provided with three vessels. Half the flour sold in Persia must be purchased from the State...⁴

¹*AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Persia (1750), file 8, f. 29.

²*Ibid.*, file 6, f. 206.

³Russian weight equal to 210 liters.

⁴In July 1757 Nersēs Babanov (his Russian name was Vasili Abramov) brought a law suit against Shirvanov claiming that he was promised half the profits from the 1282 sacks (each sack was approximately 325 lbs.) of flour he took to Persia, *AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1757), file 1, ff. 59-60. In August 1750 Armenian merchants of Astrakhan, Galust Buniatov and Sargis Ivanov petitioned Empress Elizabeth to permit them to expand their trade with Persia. On September 24 and October 9 the Collegium of Foreign Affairs decreed that the Armenian merchants from Astrakhan could enlarge their trade activities in Persia, *AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Persia (1750), file 5, ff. 55-67. On 28 December 1750 the Collegium of Foreign Affairs wrote to Brylkin reiterating its decree, *ibid.*, ff. 75-82.

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Kat'oghikos Ghazar to the Armenians of Astrakhan(17 October 1750)¹

The Servant of Jesus Christ, Patriarch Ghazar, Kat'oghikos of All Armenians...to the Armenians of Astrakhan—persons of property,² the notables, the elders of the community, sacristans, wise merchants, able craftsmen, hardworking farmers, and all others, both males and females, young and old—Amen.

You know that St. Gregory, after bringing Christianity to Armenia, sent a kat'oghikos to Georgia and another one to Caucasian Albania to convert the inhabitants of those regions. When the Persian kings came to our land they drove most of the Albanian Armenians to Khorasan, Kabul, and Qandahar. Armenians were also forced to live in Julfa, Farahabad, Mazandaran, and Hamadan. The Albanians adopted Persian ways and assimilated.

The kat'oghikos of Aghuank' was to oversee the Albanian Armenians and no others. He, however, has usurped his authority and now plans to spread his authority over your community. I write to you once again to remind you that you should remain loyal to the Holy See of Ējmiatsin ... Written on 17 October 1199 (1750).³

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Zurap Zavriev's Petition(6 November 1750)⁴

I, Zurap Zavriev, a Georgian Armenian nobleman, prostrate myself before Your Highness with the following request:

My brother Paul Zavriev left Georgia with the late King Wakhtang and joined the Georgian squadron in Kizliar. He was killed in Gilan during the 1727 campaign against Persia.

¹MAAC, Eritsyan's Archives, file 155, doc. 3.

²The text has *dolvat'avor*, which is derived from *dovlatdār*, person of property.

³The letter was delivered on 4 February 1751 by the Armenian Vardapet Ignatius.

⁴TsGVIA, Coll. 10, group 2/109, file 11, f. 735.

My humble self, hearing of Your Majesty's benevolence towards us foreigners, left for the Ukraine¹ in 1748 and moved in with acquaintances who were serving in the Georgian Hussar regiment.

Like my relatives and friends I wish to serve Your Majesty and benefit from Your protection, which you have bestowed upon our Georgian princes and noblemen. I humbly request that you permit me to join the Georgian Hussar Regiment and to spent the rest of my life in Russia...²

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Filibek Shergilov to Commandant Devits(5 February 1751)³

Lieutenant Colonel Filibek Shergilov of the irregular forces composing the Georgian squadron submitted the following report in the Tatar dialect to Lieutenant General Devits on the conditions in Persia:

Shahroḳ Mirza has sent 30,000 *tomans* and a thoroughbred horse dressed in gold to Erekle Khan and has asked him to be the commander (*sar'askar*) of all the Persian forces. He has also appointed Erekle's father, T'eimuraz as a general (*sepahdār*). He has ordered that Erekle make peace with Panāh Khan. Panāh Khan has presented himself before Erekle and has submitted to him. The Afghan khan⁴ has demanded 400,000 rubles from the citizens of Tabriz. He planned to take the money and flee to Daghestan. Hearing this Erekle has ordered his forces to seek and to catch the Afghan khan.

Erekle has sent his men to Shemakhi Province and to Baku to gather provisions for his forces and to take 400,000 rubles stored at the Baku treasury. Erekle has spread his influence throughout Transcaucasia.

The Turks have sent forces into western Georgia and have crushed their rebellion. The Turkish sultan has sent a letter to Erekle praising him for maintaining order in Persia in the absence of a real Shah. He stated that if any Turks harm Persian subjects they would be severely punished.

¹Text has *Malorossiiu* (Small Russia).

²On 13 November an order from the chief of the Commissariat of the Army, Prince Meshcherskii, instructed Alexander Buturlin to accept Zavriev into the Georgian Hussar Regiment, *TsGVIA*, Coll. 10, group 2/109, file 11, ff. 740-741.

³AVPR, Russia's Relations with Persia (1751), file 7, f. 21.

⁴Āzād Khan Afghan, see note of doc. 257.

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***Register of the Armenians Who Were Honorably Discharged
from the Armeno-Georgian Squadrons***(27 February 1751)¹*Armenian Squadron*

Name and Rank	Age	Began Service	Reason for Discharge
Peter Turusov, dragoon	65	3 March 1724	eye disease
Kalust Ivanisov, dragoon	60	6 March 1725	lung disease
Esaguli Artem'ev, dragoon	67	7 June 1726	old and senile
Makafel Galykov, dragoon	46	4 September 1746	syphilis
Petrus' Sarkisov, dragoon	47	9 September 1737	crushed chest

Georgian Squadron

Peter Bogdanov, dragoon	50	10 May 1727	lung disease
Agish Kasparov, dragoon	50	6 March 1725	poor eyesight and scurvy

All of the above are discharged and shall receive full provisions for their livelihood. Signed: A. Devits²

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Statement of an Armenian Jeweler(20 April 1751)³

Her Majesty's Consulate in Persia has received a signed statement from Rafail Ivanov, an Armenian from Ghap'an, stating that he has purchased a diamond weighing 42.5 carats in Rasht to take to the court of Her Imperial Majesty in Russia. He has paid 16,000 rubles for the diamond and has spent additional 2,000 rubles in gifts.

¹*TsGVIA*, Coll. 13, group 1/107, file 97, f. 2.

²On 11 and 14 May, the discharges were approved, *ibid.*, ff. 3-4.

³*AVPR*, Russia's relations with Persia (1751), file 3, f. 55.

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Testimony of Ivan Avgustinov(13 December 1751)¹

Ivan Avgustinov, an Armenian resident of Lvov, testified that he and his partner, Nicholas Cherkasov, arrived in Astrakhan on orders from their employer, Commissioner Nikorovic, to collect the sum left by their employer's cashier who had died in Isfahan.² They went to visit the French Roman Catholic priest, Fedel, to obtain 3,390 rubles, which the priest had brought from Isfahan. They received the sum in Persian coins and disposed of it as follows: 1,300 rubles to Tatus Mikhailov, a resident of Astrakhan; 1,110 rubles to Fedor Kuz'min and 300 rubles to Ivan Semenov, both residents of Tula. They received 9.10 rubles worth of Russian money for every 10 rubles worth of Persian coins. They also gave 525 rubles to Peter Iakovlev, a merchant from Kursk—receiving 9.20 rubles worth of Russian money for every 10 rubles worth of Persian coins. They gave 100 rubles to a Moscow merchant whose name is not known and received 9.10 rubles of Russian money for every 10 rubles worth of Persian coins. They also gave 50 rubles to Hājji, a Persian, and received 8.50 rubles worth of Russian money for every ten rubles worth of Persian coins. With the funds they purchased 1,000 rubles worth of goods. Avgustinov also loaned 200 rubles to Nicholas Dmitrev, a Greek, who promised to return the sum in Nizhni-Novgorod. In addition the late cashier had loaned 500 rubles to the Persian Armenian Tamaz Rafailovich. The said sum was returned to Avgustinov. The two men wish to return to Lvov via Kiev. They want to take the merchandise they have purchased here as well as the remaining sum of money to their employer, the Commissioner Nikorovic.

¹*AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Persia (1752), file 3, ff. 14-15.

²Gregory Nikorovic was an Armenian merchant in Poland. He was the largest importer of Oriental goods. His trading company had branches in Lvov, Constantinople, and other cities. His son Shimon continued to run the firm after Gregory's death. In 1746 Gregory was sent to Isfahan as the representative of the Polish king Augustus III, with the rank of commissioner.

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Peter Shuvalov¹ to the War Collegium(14 January 1752)²

Major General Saltykov has received a petition from the commander of the Georgian Hussar Regiment, Prince Amilakhvorov. The petition was addressed to Her Imperial Majesty and was from a Georgian citizen (an Armenian), Agha Galustov, originally a Catholic from Turkey.³ Galustov wishes to join the Armenian Squadron in Kizliar as an officer. I am forwarding his petition.⁴

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King T'eimuraz and King Erekle to Empress Elizabeth(26 May 1752)⁵

We, your humble slaves, bow before you, the Mother of All Orthodox Christians...For many years our kingdom has been under the rule of foreign tyrants as God punished us for our sins...At the present no infidel king rules over us and it is time that we resurrect our kingdom...Our land is surrounded by non-Christian peoples. They attack us in summer and winter. They kill and enslave us. They plan to destroy our churches. Their princes have united and have taken an oath on their holy book to destroy the Georgian people and to convert them to Islam...We have no one to help us but Your Majesty, who is the Mother of All Orthodox Christians. Please help us against the Ishmaelite...⁶

¹General field marshal Peter Ivanovich Shuvalov. Like his brothers Ivan and Alexander, Shuvalov enjoyed the confidence of Elizabeth. He was responsible for the reorganization of the Russian army, see biographical notes.

²*TsGVIA*, Coll. 13, group 1/107, file 106, f. 100.

³Agha Galustov was born ca. 1709. In 1739 he came to Georgia, converted to the Russian Orthodox faith, and took the name Alexander. He moved to Russia and participated in the Russo-Swedish War of 1741-1743 with the rank of sergeant.

⁴On 25 May the War Collegium approved the petition, *TsGVIA*, Coll. 13, group 1/107, file 106, f. 112. Later that year Galustov was promoted to the rank of lieutenant, *ibid.*, f. 131.

⁵*AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Georgia (1752) file 4, ff. 53-54.

⁶Metropolitan and Prince Afanasii Tbileli Amilakhvari and Simon Makashvili delivered the letter. The main purpose of the visit was to convince Russia to aid Georgia, to take advantage of the chaos in Persia by extending its

T'eimuraz Bagration, King of Georgia and Erekle, King of Kakhet'i

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Decree of Empress Elizabeth
(16 November 1752)¹

The Armenian Manvel Nazaretov and his brothers Artem, Bogdan, and Nikit, together with his partner Ignatii Ivanov and his brother Peter have requested that they be our subjects and reside in St. Petersburg. We have granted their wish and decree that they are free to trade all over Our Kingdom. They are to pay the same duties as collected from Russian merchants.

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Petition by Armenian Merchants of Moscow
(November 1752)²

Vasilii Makarov, a resident of Moscow, Artemii Nazarov (Lazarev) of the Julfa Company, and Luke Shirvanov of St. Petersburg prostrate themselves before Your Majesty with the following petition:

In November of 1750 we submitted a request to the Collegium of Foreign Affairs to permit us to construct a church in Moscow. If a suitable place was not found, we requested that a small church be constructed in the yard of Vasilii Makarov's house in *Kitai-gorod*,³ or in the Armenian cemetery near Presn. Your illustrious ancestors Peter the Great and Empress Anna had permitted us to build houses of worship, which has been forbidden by Your Majesty's order of 1742.⁴

influence over all of Transcaucasia, *AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Georgia (1752), file 4, f. 17. Since Elizabeth's main concern at the time was to check the expansionist policies of Frederick II, the Collegium decided that they could not actively assist the Georgians. In addition they could not compel the Lesghians, who were not under Russian suzerainty, to desist from attacking Georgia. Finally since Russia was at peace with the Ottoman Empire, any overt interference in Transcaucasia could anger the Turks.

¹*Ibid.*, f. 1.

²*AVPR*, Russia's relations with Armenia (1752-1760), file 1, f. 1.

³*Kitai-gorod* was the main commercial center of Moscow.

⁴On 31 November 1753 Captain Prince Otar Tumanov of Moscow, Grigor Davidov, son of Eseelev of the Julfa Company, and Ivan Semenov, son of Mir-zakhanov also petitioned the government to permit them to construct a church in

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Luke Shirvanov to the Collegium of Foreign Affairs
(8 December 1752)¹

I possess two boats, *Ravel'* and *Pernov*, in Astrakhan. They were taken by the Astrakhan treasury in 1747 and kept until 1750. His Excellency Admiral Prince Michael Mikhailovich Golitsyn (during his return trip from Persia to Astrakhan) sent the ships to Gilan to bring horses for the Astrakhan chancery, as well as to transport the assessor Cherkesov and Captain Kopytovskii to Persia. Officials of the Russian State have not paid me for the use of my boats. Since my ships were unavailable, my brothers, who were conducting business in Persia at the time, had to pay freight costs for transporting their merchandise to Astrakhan. I request that the Collegium order the Astrakhan chancery to pay me the allotted sum for the use of my vessels.

Moscow, *AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1752-1760), file 1, ff. 5-7. In June 1760 Artemii Lazarev wrote the following petition to the Collegium of Foreign Affairs: All Christians, as well as Muslims, have been granted permission to construct churches and mosques, while we Armenians have been denied that right, except for the church in Astrakhan. Furthermore, we have a large Armenian population in Astrakhan and the sole church is inadequate for all those who wish to worship...Many rich Armenians from Julfa, with huge capitals, have left Persia for Turkey and India. Others wish to come to Russia but have delayed their departure for fear that they would not be able to pray in their own churches...*AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1760), file 1, ff. 3-4. The Collegium tentatively approved the construction of an Armenian church in the cemetery of Presn in Moscow. It also permitted the use of the *Kitai-gorod* residence as a place of worship, *AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1760), file 1, f. 37. In June of 1760 Luke Shirvanov once again asked Russia to permit the construction of an Armenian church in St. Petersburg, *ibid.*, ff. 5-8. Elizabeth did not issue a decree and nothing was done in either site until her death. On December 4, 1762 the Senate permitted Hovannes Asaturov to construct a new church in the Armenian quarter of Astrakhan at his own expense, *MAAC*, Lazarev Archives, file 22, doc. 4.

¹*AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1752), file 4, f. 1 (obverse).

252

Decree by the Collegium of Foreign Affairs

(June 1753)¹

Dmitrii Mangov, an Armenian from Georgia, who left Persia some years ago, was, in 1746, forbidden to travel to Astrakhan and Persia. The reason for that was because he served Hosein Khan [as an interpreter] and the latter did not wish anyone to know that he had moved to Russia. Mangov was thus given permission to trade everywhere in Russia except Astrakhan and pay the same duties as Russian merchants. Since Hosein Khan now lives in Astrakhan and everyone knows his presence, Mangov may move from St. Petersburg to Astrakhan and trade in Persia.²

253

Report from the Kizliar Fort

(1754)³

Six thousand Lesghians attacked the town of Mchadisdjvari.⁴ For eight days they laid siege and their sappers placed gunpowder in two locations by the walls of the fort. The explosions did not cause major damage but killed six people in one location. The Georgians made a sortie and killed 61 Lesghians, while suffering seven casualties... King T'eimuraz and Prince Erekle arrived with 5,000 men. They brought three cannons and fired on the Lesghians. The enemy fled and suffered 331 casualties, while the Georgians had only twelve wounded. The Georgian king returned to Tiflis and the Lesghians returned to their mountains.

¹ *AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Persia (1753), file 2, f. 18.

² In 1758 and 1759 Mangov traveled to Persia and Turkey and sent confidential reports on the political situation in eastern Armenia and Georgia to A. M. Obrezakov, the Russian resident in Constantinople and Chakalevskii the Russian consul in Rasht. His reports include the activities of some noblemen led by Pa-ata, an illegitimate son of Wakhtang VI, who plotted to overthrow Erekle with the help of Persia and Turkey, *AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1759), file 1, ff. 4-9.

³ *TsGVIA*, Coll. 20, group 1/47, file 501, f. 15.

⁴ A fort in K'art'li. The report was sent by Tamazov who was sent from Kizliar to ascertain conditions in Georgia and who was in Mchadisdjvari at the time of the attack.

254

List of Dragoons Discharged from the Armenian Squadron
(10 June 1754)¹

Name	Age	Began Service	Reason for Discharge
Markar Miriumov	70	1726	old age and senility
Kalust Kasparov	70	1736	lung disease and poor eyesight
Kaspar Mikirtimov	60	1723	scurvy, poor eyesight
Sarakhan Min'iasov	60	1724	back problems, poor eyesight
Sagan Pogosov	55	1726	broken arm from horses's kick
Artemii Pirimov	63	1726	broken back, lame
Arbansun Mala- tsagonov	60	1726	senility and lung problems

255

Petition by Armenian Merchants of Astrakhan
(23 May 1755)²

The Armenian merchants of Astrakhan—Armenian [Apostolic] and Catholics—have petitioned that they be permitted to trade freely in Persia, Bukhara, and Khiva as before. They have asked the chancery of the governor of Astrakhan to use their individual capital, or to form a company if the chancery so desires...³

¹*TsGVIA*, Coll. 13, group 1/107, file 106, f. 274.

²*AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1755), file 1, f. 8.

³The merchants in question were Tatul Mikhailov, Sergei Ivanov, Khanzat Buniatov, David Grigor'ev, Panos Ivanov, Pavel Khoteev, Peter Vartanov, Revas Zaleev, Ignatii Ivanov, Ivan Tamazov, *ibid.*, f. 4. On 11 April 1756 the Collegium of Foreign Affairs decreed that the Armenian merchants could export flour to Persia, *ibid.*, ff. 47-48.

256

Report by Captain Tumanov¹ to General Ivan von Frauendorf²
(6 November 1755)³

Yusuf,⁴ the melik of the *seghnagh*, left his domain and came to Tiflis with his family. He has sixty men with him. There is a shortage of bread in his land and his people have sought refuge with the king of Georgia. Another melik, Atamas (Adam)⁵ has sent his family to Ganja and has stayed behind to guard his domain. They have not received any aid from Georgia and wish to come to Russia...

257

Report by Prince Alexei Saakdze
(24 July 1756)⁶

Following orders I met with the Georgian kat'olikos, Antoni,⁷ at the Chervlennoi quarantine station. I spoke with him through the window and ascertained the purpose of his visit to Russia. He stated that he left Georgia two months ago following accusations by the Georgian kings, who claimed that he had betrayed the Orthodox faith and had converted to Catholicism. He swears that no such thing ever crossed his mind and that his enemies among the princes had spread false accusations...⁸A

¹Captain Otar Tumanov was dispatched to Georgia to report on the conditions in Transcaucasia.

²Major General Ivan L'vovich von Frauendorf was the commandant of the Kizliar fort in the 1750s.

³*TsGVIA*, Coll. 20, group 1/47, file 549, ff. 13-14.

⁴Refers to Melik Hovsēp' (Usub, Yusup) of the Beglarian clan of Gulistan, who was forced by Panāh Khan to flee to Shamkhor, see Bournoutian, *Qarabagh*, p. 58.

⁵Refers to Melik Adam (Hatam) of Jraberd, who together with his brother resisted the attacks of Panāh Khan from their fortress in Jermuk. They were finally forced to flee to Ganja, see Bournoutian, *Qarabagh*, p. 55 n. 112.

⁶*TsGVIA*, Coll. 20 group 1/47, file 549, ff. 23-24.

⁷Kat'olikos (Catholicos) Anton Ieses-dze Batonishvili (1744-1755, 1764-1788).

⁸There is some evidence that Catholic missionaries had made some inroads in Georgia. According to the *Chronicle of the Carmelites* (I, 569) Domenti III (1705-1725, 1739-1741), the uncle of Antoni and the previous kat'olikos of

Georgian nobleman, Bezhan Cherkesov, who accompanied the kat'olikos, informed me that Karīm Khan,¹ is planning to install a son of the Shah on the throne. He has gathered a large army and wants to meet Āzād Khan in battle. The latter, however, retreated to Urumiye and there has been no battle between them...²

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Register of the Armeno-Georgian Squadron in Kizliar(9 October 1756)³

Major General von Frauendorf reports that on 1 July 1756 the following persons formed the Georgian and Armenian squadrons in the fort of Kizliar:

Georgian Squadron

Two lieutenant colonels

Three captains

Four lieutenants

Two ensigns

Six dragoons

Total sixteen persons⁴*Armenian Squadron*

One lieutenant colonel

One Captain

Georgia had secretly written to Rome and had expressed his desire to become a Roman Catholic Uniat. Rumors began to circulate that Antoni was also sympathetic towards Catholicism and he was exiled in 1755 to Russia where he spent nine years as an Orthodox archbishop.

¹Karīm Khan Zand controlled parts of Persia from 1747 until his death in 1779. He refused to take the title of Shah and insisted on the name of *vakīl* (deputy), for more details see John R. Perry, *Karim Khan Zand* (Chicago, 1979).

²In 1757 Āzād Khan fled to Tiflis and lived there for two years. In 1759 Erekle in order to ingratiate himself before the new Persian ruler and receiving assurances that Āzād Khan's life would be spared, sent him to Karīm Khan's court, where he lived comfortably until his death in 1781.

³*TsGVIA*, Coll. 13, group 1/107, file 106, f. 635.

⁴Text has sixteen, but the correct number is seventeen.

One lieutenant
 One ensign
 Five sergeants
 Eight dragoons
 Total seventeen persons¹

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Decree of the State Senate
 (1756)²

Captain Prince Gabriel Nazarov of the Astrakhan garrison has submitted the following petition:

His father, the Georgian Prince David Nazarov,³ left Georgia with the late King Wakhtang Leonovich and sought Russian protection. After his father's death, Prince Gabriel lived with his mother and brother, Prince Michael, in Astrakhan. They received an allotment of 200 rubles in cash, 90 rubles worth of provisions, and 6 rubles worth of firewood [annually]. In 1740 Gabriel entered the ranks of the Semenovskiy Grenadiers and later became a sergeant. Unlike other Georgian nobleman, he did not have an income from an estate. In 1741 he petitioned the Senate to grant him an estate of 30 peasants, but since he was on active duty his petition was rejected. In 1742, Nazarov left the Armenian rite and joined the Greek [Orthodox] Church. In 1744 Her Majesty elevated him to the rank of captain in the Semenovskiy Regiment, a position he holds at the Astrakhan garrison...His salary of 60 rubles a year barely covers his personal expenses. The other Georgian princes, following the decree of 1738, receive income from villages in the Ukraine...His brother wishes to join the army as well...His request has been reviewed by the Senate and he shall receive land in Ukraine equal to that of his compatriot Georgian princes and his mother shall receive an income.

¹On 24 December 1756 the War Collegium decreed that the children of the members of the Armenian and Armeno-Georgian squadrons could join the Russian army. The retirement of many older members had depleted the ranks of the squadrons. In addition the regular salaries and provisions were attractive. Petitions from the fathers also played a role, *ibid.*, ff. 358, 781.

²*AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Georgia (1756), file 3, ff. 2-4.

³David Nazarashvili was an Armenian courtier in the service of King Wakhtang VI. He participated in the Persian campaigns of Peter the Great.

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Manvel Isakhanov Petition(January 1757)¹

The merchant Manvel Isakhanov, son of Nazaret, a resident of St. Petersburg begs the following:

In 1752 my brother and I left Persia and with Her Majesty's permission settled here. We left our family and our immovable property there... We request that we be permitted to gather 1,000 horses from the Astrakhan and Kizliar steppes and to sell them in Persia.

We shall, of course, pay the necessary duty. In addition, we are prepared to pay one percent of our profits in gold or silver to the Astrakhan treasury...²

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Decree of the State Senate(24 February 1757)³

Vasilii Makarov, son of Khostatov, a silk merchant from Moscow; Nikita Tomofeev, son of Shemiakin, a merchant from Kaluzh; and Alexei Ivanov, son of Yaroslav, a merchant from Yaroslavl, in the interest of Her Majesty are permitted to trade goods, especially lumber, iron bars, and pig-iron (except in the form of cannons or other weapons) from the port of Temernik⁴ to Constantinople, Italy, Venice, and other points via the Black Sea.

They can export 100,000 *puds* of iron (50,000 *puds* of pig-iron), as well as sails, ropes, fish, fish roe, canvas, gravel, leather, and other minor items found at the port of Temernik...

¹AVPR, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1757-1758), file 3, ff. 1-2.

²On 17 June the Collegium of Foreign Affairs rejected the petition, *ibid.*, ff. 3-5. On 17 November 1758 the Isakhanov brothers (Manvel and Bogdan) were granted the right to sell salt to Persia. The company functioned until the 1780s, *ibid.*, (1758-1761), file 1, ff. 1-11.

³PSZR, XIV, doc. 10694.

⁴The Temernik Customhouse was situated by the Don River (present-day Rostov-on-Don). It was a major port during the 18th century.

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Members of the Armeno-Georgian Squadrons
(September 1758)¹

The commandant of Kizliar, Major General von Frauendorf submitted the following list to the War Collegium of the composition of the Georgian and Armenian squadrons:

Georgian Squadron

Name	Salary	Began	Promoted	Stationed
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Lieutenant-Colonel

Taga Kuzanov	360 rubls.	1724	1744	Astrakhan
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Armenian from Georgia, member of the Armenian Apostolic Church. Joined during the reign of Peter the Great--does not remember the month. He joined the Nizovoi Corps in Tiflis and served in Persia under the command of General Field Marshal Prince Vasilii Vladimirovich Dolgorukov. He did not receive a salary for three years. General Levashov promoted him to the rank of ensign and then captain. Does not remember the month or the year of the promotion. In 1734 by the order of the War Collegium he was promoted to the rank of major and in 1744 he was promoted to his current rank. He has served Major General von Frauendorf since 1758 and took part in the campaign against the Chechens.

Captains

Afanasii Bezhanov	180	1749	1756	Kizliar
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A Georgian nobleman who joined the squadron on 4 December 1749. He was promoted by a decree of the War Collegium on 10 December 1756 to the rank of captain. He took part in the campaign against the Chechens under the command of Major General von Frauendorf.

Isai Akhverdov	180	1739	1753	Kizliar
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An Armenian who has converted to Greek Orthodoxy, he is a son of a merchant who joined the Georgian Hussar Regiment on 1 June 1739. He took part in the Turkish and Swedish campaigns. In 1743 he was promoted to the rank of sergeant by the governor of Kiev, General Michael

¹TsGVIA, Coll. 13, group 1/107, file 99, ff. 136-146.

Foma Murvanov 180 1752 1755 Kizliar
A Georgian nobleman, he was given the rank of lieutenant by the State Senate on 16 September 1752. On 12 May 1755, the War Collegium promoted him to the rank of captain. In 1758 he took part in the campaign against the Chechens under the command of Major General von Frauendorf.

Zakhar Khrablev	180	1755	1755	Astrakhan
An Armenian nobleman from Georgia, he was given the rank of captain by the State Senate on 28 June 1755. In 1758 he took part in the cam-				

paign against the Chechens under the command of Major General von Frauendorf.

Anofrei Dzhemardyzov 180 1755 1755 Kizliar

A Georgian nobleman, he was given the rank of captain by the State Senate on 31 December 1755. In 1758 he took part in the campaign against the Chechens under the command of Major General von Frauendorf.

Prince Osip Tumanov 180 1756 1756 Kizliar

An Armenian nobleman in Georgia, he was given the rank of captain by the State Senate on 20 November 1756. In 1758 he took part in the campaign against the Chechens under the command of Major General von Frauendorf.

Papadar Sarkizov 180 1739 1756 Kizliar

An Armenian from Georgia, son of a merchant, he joined the army on 1 June 1739. He rose to the rank of quartermaster. On 5 December 1750 the War Collegium transferred him to the Georgian Hussar Regiment with the rank of lieutenant. On 10 December 1756 the War Collegium promoted him to the rank of captain. He has fought in the Swedish War and has taken part in the 1758 campaign against the Chechens.

Lieutenants

Ivan Bogdanov 84 1723 1731 Kizliar

An Armenian, son of a merchant, he joined the dragoons in 1723, but does not remember the day or month. In 1725 he joined the Persian corps of General Levashov and was promoted to the rank of sergeant. In 1731 he was promoted to lieutenant. In 1727 he took part in the battle of Lashmadan against Moḥammad 'Alī Ša'rīlu Khan where he was wounded in the head. In 1723 he fought in the battle of Rasht against seven Persian khans and in 1725 he was among the army of Prince Bariatinskii which fought against the forces of five khans. He was wounded in the arm and back. In 1726 he took part in the campaign against the Afghans in Rudsar under the command of Colonel Iurlov. He fought in the battle around the village of Kichik against the Gilani khans, Agaki and Kirda Qolī. After that he was dispatched to Mashhad with a number of letters. He spent an entire year in Persia. He then joined the army at Nizovoi and took part in

a number of battles. He is now old and no longer capable of active service.

Eremai Davydov	120	1724	1732	Moscow
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A Georgian nobleman who joined the Russian army in 1723—exact date unknown. He was promoted to the rank of lieutenant on 3 February 1732 and lives in Moscow. He is no longer a young man and seems to support himself by private means.

Ensigns

Zakhar Eldemirov	84	1723	1755	Moscow
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An Armenian convert to Greek Orthodoxy, he joined the army in 1723—exact date unknown. He took part in many battles and secret missions to Persia. He was promoted to the rank of ensign in 1735 but was demoted because of drunkenness and a brawl with two Cossacks. On 22 May 1755, the War Collegium reinstated his rank.

Alexander Kurganov	84	1739	1751	Kizliar
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A Georgian nobleman, he joined the Hussar Regiment on 1 June 1739. He took part in the Swedish campaign and was promoted to the rank of corporal in 1741. In 1746 he became the quartermaster of his unit. In 1751 the War Collegium promoted him to the rank of ensign and in 1758 he took part in the campaign against the Chechens.

Esei Anan'ev	84	1739	1756	Kizliar
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A Georgian nobleman, he joined the Hussar regiment on 1 July 1739 as a corporal. On 25 November 1749 he was promoted to the rank of quartermaster and on 20 May 1754 he became a sergeant. He took part in the Swedish campaign. On 12 February 1756 he was promoted to the rank of ensign and assigned to the Georgian squadron in Kizliar. In 1758 he took part in the war against the Chechens.

Peter Bizarov	84	1757	Moscow
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A Georgian nobleman, he was appointed as an ensign to the Georgian squadron at Kizliar on 24 August 1757, but has not reported to duty yet.

Alaverdi Iliarizdev	84	1757	1757	Moscow
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A Georgian nobleman, he was appointed as an ensign to the Georgian squadron at Kizliar on 24 August 1757, but has not reported to duty yet.

Prince Evsei Baratov	84	1757	1757	Kizliar
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A Georgian nobleman, he was appointed by the War Collegium on 13 December 1757. He is old and has not taken part in any campaigns.

Atar Cheferidzev	84	1757	1757	Moscow
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A Georgian prince, he was appointed by the War Collegium on 13 December, but has not reported to duty.

Sergeants

Ivan Dzhemardyzov	16.98	1755	1755	Kizliar
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A Georgian, son of Captain Dzhemardyzov, he was appointed by the War Collegium on 31 December 1755. He is very young and has not yet seen active service.

Prince Il'ia Tumanov,	16.98	1756	1756	Astrakhan
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An Armenian, son of Captain Tumanov, he was appointed by the War Collegium on 26 November 1756. He is very young and has not seen active service.

Nicholas Karnakhmetev, Sgt.	16.98	----	1757	Moscow
Vasilii Dmitriev	16.98	----	1757	Moscow
Markel Mekhmedov	16.98	----	1757	Moscow
Maksim Fedorov	16.98	----	1757	Moscow

Georgian noblemen, all were appointed by the War Collegium on 24 August 1757, but have not reported to duty at this time.

Corporals

Vasilii Akhverdov	15	1753	1754	Kizliar
Fedor Akhverdov	15	1753	1754	Kizliar

Georgians, sons of Captain Akhverdov, they were appointed by the War Collegium on 16 December 1753 to the Georgian squadron at Kizliar as dragoons. On 10 November 1754, on the occasion of the birthday of His Highness Prince Paul Petrovich, Major General von Frauendorf promoted them to the ranks of corporal. They are too young and have not seen active service.

Dragoons

Simon Gumarov	15	1733		Kizliar
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An Armenian who joined the army in 1733—exact date unknown. He has not served in any campaigns.

Sharmazan Bakedurov 15 1733 Kizliar

A Georgian, he has served in the campaign against the Chechens in 1758.

Armenian Squadron

Lieutenant-Colonel

Peter Kasparov 360 1722 1734 Kizliar

An Armenian, son of a merchant, he was recruited by Peter the Great on 1 January 1722 and appointed to the rank of sergeant. He accompanied His Majesty to Nizovoi and served under Levashov in Rasht. He was dispatched to various parts of Persia, such as Keskar, Pumin, and Kesme. He was arrested in Kesme, was put in chains and tortured for three months. He was forced to work for the Persians and was promised the title of khan. He soon escaped and took five Russian sailors who were in prison with him. He rejoined Levashov's troops and served faithfully. He received a bullet wound in his shoulder. In 1728 was promoted to the rank of lieutenant by the late General Prince Dolgorukov. In 1732 General Levashov promoted him to the rank of major. On 1 April 1734 the War Collegium promoted him to the rank of lieutenant colonel and in 1758 he took part in the war against the Chechens.

Captains

Hakob Shamirov 180 1722 1754 Kizliar

Armenian from Shemakhi, he joined the Russian army during its Persian campaign in 1722—exact date unknown. Lieutenant-Colonel Shipov commissioned him to take a number of letters to Gilan where he recruited a number of Armenians. In 1723 the late Prince Dolgorukov promoted him to the rank of sergeant. In 1728 General Levashov promoted him to the rank of lieutenant. On 16 December 1754 the War Collegium, on the recommendation of the senior officers of the Armenian squadron, promoted him to the rank of captain. He took part in the war against the Chechens in 1758.

Bogdan Aslanov 180 1754 1754 Moscow

Armenian noble from Persia, he was appointed to the rank of captain by the State Senate. He has not reported for duty and his abilities are unknown.

Lieutenants

Alexander Galustov	120	1752	1752	Kizliar
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Armenian Catholic from Turkey, he converted to Greek Orthodoxy and joined the Georgian Hussar Regiment. He took part in the Swedish campaign and on 10 July 1752 the State Senate gave him the rank of lieutenant in the Armenian Squadron at Kizliar. He took part in the 1758 campaign against the Chechens

Ivan Sumbatov	120	1753	1756	Moscow
Nikita Sumbatov	120	1753	1756	Moscow

Armenians, sons of Captain Sumbatov, both were appointed as sergeants by the War Collegium in 1753. In 1756 they were both promoted to the rank of lieutenant by the War Collegium. Their abilities are not known.

Ensign

Khachatur Hakopov	84	1722	1731	Kizliar
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Armenian, he joined the army as a dragoon in 1722—exact date unknown. He served under General Levashov in Persia and was promoted to sergeant in 1726. In 1731 the same general promoted him to the rank of ensign.¹

Sergeants

Aftandil Mamukov	16.98	1724	1732	Kizliar
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Armenian, he joined the army as a dragoon in 1724 and was promoted to corporal in 1726. General Levashov promoted him to the rank of sergeant in 1732. He took part in the war against the Chechens in 1758.

Ivan Kasparov	16.98	1754	1754	Kizliar
Vasilii Kasparov	16.98	1754	1754	Kizliar

Armenians, sons of Lieutenant Colonel Kasparov, they were given their commission by the State Senate but are too young to serve actively.

Dragoons

Melkom Kasparov	15	1725		Kizliar
Mirzajan Hakopov	15	1725		Kizliar

¹See doc. 263 for more details on Hakopov. According to him he joined the Russian army in 1723 and not 1722.

Armenians, they took part in numerous campaigns against Persia and in 1758 took part in the war against the Chechens under the command of Major General von Frauendorf.

Kevork Gulajanov 15 1725 Kizliar
Armenian, he took part in numerous battles during the Persian campaigns but is currently old and cannot be on active duty.

The above officers and soldiers receive provisions for themselves and fodder for their horses.¹

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Petition of Khachatur Hakopov (October 1759)²

I, the Armenian ensign, Khachatur Hakopov, son of Tamazov, humbly request that Her Imperial Majesty, Elizabeth Petrovna, grant me the enclosed petition:

I voluntarily joined the Russian forces in Persia in 1723. I lived in Ganja and belonged to the Roman faith. General Levashov promoted me to the rank of corporal in 1725 and in 1728 I became a sergeant. In 1733 I was elevated to the rank of ensign, a position I currently hold.

¹On 3 September 1763, Colonel Ivan de Büchsberg submitted a report to the War Collegium listing all the current members of the Georgian and Armenian squadrons. Taga Kuzanov had been promoted to the rank of colonel (in 1761). The Georgian squadron had a new lieutenant colonel: Prince Alexander Bagration, who received a special salary of 720 rubles per annum. The other members were: Major Shergilov, Captains Akhverdov, Murvanov, Ivanov, Bezhanov, Sarkisov, and Bogdanov; Lieutenant Korganov (appointed in 1759); Ensigns Anan'ev, Bizarov, Iliuridzev, Prince Baratov, Chufaridzev, Meshcherbatov (1759), Almazov (1759), Eldemirov (1759), Ozerov (1760), Stamatiev (1760), Khanchurov (1760), Mangov (1760), and Tumanov (1760); sergeants Tumanov, Kornakhmetev, Dmitrev, Makhmetev, Fedorov, Baratov, Surkhanov (1760), and Sobov (1762); quartermasters Georgiev and Baratov; and dragoons Bandurov and Almazov (1759). The Armenian Squadron was led by Major Mirzabek Shamirov (1759), an Armenian of Karabagh who replaced Kasparov after the latter died. Two new sergeants Vaganov and Mamajanov joined the squadron in 1759, *TsGVIA*, Coll. 13, group 1/107, file 106, f. 1233.

²*Ibid.*, ff. 1017-1018.

In 1724 I saw action in Kesker against Musā Khan and Yeqia' Khan. In the same year I served in Rasht under Captain Iazikov and fought against Moḥammad Qolī Khan. In 1725 was involved in the battle of Lashmadan under the command of Major Glubokin. We faced Moḥammad 'Alī Khan. Later that year I saw action by the Tulun River when we faced the same khan. Lieutenant Colonel Shilpov led us. At the end of that year we fought against the Gilani bandits near the Pasikhan River. In 1726 I saw action in Shambebazar against Ḥājji Bāḡer. A year later we faced the Persian bandits in the same region. In 1728, I participated in the battle of Lahejan against the *qūrči-başı* (head of cavalry guards). Later that year we were under the command of Major Iurlov and fought Saldāl Khan, the Afghan, in Rudsar. In 1729, while in Kutum, I was under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Schilling and we engaged the forces of Devgish Shah. In addition I defended the Nizovoi and Kizliar forts during various attacks and have served faithfully ever since...

I wish that my son, Artem, be enrolled in the service of Your Majesty as an officer. I enclose the recommendations of my senior officers, all of whom attest to my services to the crown...

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Kat'oghikos Hakob of Shemakhi¹ to the Russian State
(26 June 1760)²

From the Slave of Christ, who thanks to His Blessing is the Kat'oghikos and Leader of All Armenians, the successor of the Apostles Thaddeus and Bartholomew and the successor of St. Gregory, Our Illuminator...Our Armenian nation, as well as that of Georgia, have for a long time been under the yoke of the infidel. We have thus suffered for our sins, especially after the fall of the *kizilbash* [Safavid] monarchy. Our churches have been defiled and our children taken into captivity. Various groups, especially the Lesghians, attack our villages and towns killing people, burning monasteries, and enslaving the population. So many Armenians and Georgian have been killed, displaced or enslaved that I cannot describe it in words.

¹Hakob V. of Shemakhi (1759-1763), kat'oghikos at the Holy See of Ejmiatsin.

²MAAC, Archives of the Kat'oghikosate, file 243, doc. 18.

The kind Georgian king T'eimuraz and his son Erekle have fought the Lesghians but have not succeeded in eradicating their threat...The rulers of Georgia and the Christians living in these regions, Armenians and Georgians, have put their faith in Your Majesty and beg you in the name of Christ to come to our aid...May God grant You a long life and Your family eternal rule. Amen.

Written in the year 1209 [1760] of the Armenian calendar on the 26th day of June at the Holy See of Ējmiatsin. Seal of Kat'oghikos Hakob.

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Astrakhan Provincial Chancery to the War Collegium

(3 November 1760)¹

The following is a list of the members of the Armeno-Georgian squadrons and their male children:

Lieutenant-Colonel Taga Kuzanov, age 66, has no male children.

Major Abakum Shergilov, age 34, has no children.

Captain Afanasii Bezhanov, age 59, has no children.

Captain Isai Akhverdov, age 39, has five sons: Vasilii, who is 17 years old is a member of the squadron; Fedor who is 15 is also a member. Both have the rank of sergeants. The other three, Nicholas (age 7), Stepan (age 5), and Andrei (age 3) are too young to serve.

Captain Hakob Shamirov, age 65, has six sons: Eghia (age 23), Stepan (age 21), Arapet (age 18), Tatos (age 17), Kostan (age 14), and Avakim (age 11). None serve in the squadron.

Captain Foma Murvanov, age 54, has a son, Alexei, who is 8 years old.

Captain Michael Ivanov, age 45, has no children.

Captain Anofri Dzhemardizov, age 43, has a son, Ivan (age 19) who serves as a sergeant in the squadron.

Prince Osip Tumanov has three sons: Il'ia (age 17) is a sergeant in the same squadron, Ivan (age 2), and Artemii (4 months old).

Captain Papador Sarkisov, age 53, has no children.

Captain Bogdan Aslanov, age 40 and is single.

Captain Ivan Bogdanov, age 63, has three sons: Daniel (age 21), Khachatur (age 17), and Zakhar (age 10). None serve in the squadron.

Lieutenant Alexander Golustov, age 51, has no children.

Lieutenant Ivan Sumbatov, age 24 and is single.

¹*TsGVIA*, Coll. 13, group 1/107, file 106, ff. 1048-1049.

Lieutenant Nikita Sumbatov, age 21 and is single.

Lieutenant Alexander Kurganov, age 44, has no children.

Ensign Khachatur Hakopov, age 70, has a son (age 39) who is not yet a member of the squadron.

Ensign Evsei Anan'in, age 47, has no children.

The age and family members of Ensigns Peter Bizarov and Alaverdi Ileridzev are unknown.

Prince Evsei Baratov, age 51 has two sons: Vasilii (age 15) serves as a sergeant in the squadron, and Stepan (age 10) serves under the quartermaster.

Ensign Ator Deferziev's age and family members are unknown.

Ensign Michael Meshcherbatov, age 22, is single.

Ensign Lazar Serebriakov, age 37, is single.

Ensign Alexander Almazov, age 40, has two sons: Ivan (age 12) is a member of the squadron, and Vasilii (age 4).

Ensign Dementii Stamatiev, age 40, has no children.

The age and family members of Ensigns Zakhar Eldemirov, Vasilii Ozerov, and Nicholas Khaicheroev are unknown.

Ensign Dmitrii Mangov, age 36, is single.

Sergeant Avtandil Mamukov, age 58, has a son, Surakhan (age 11).

Sergeants Ivan Kasparov (age 19), Vasilii Kasparov (age 17), Ivan Dzhemardizov (age 19), and Prince Ivan Tumanov (age 17) are single.

The age and family members of Sergeants Nicholas Karkarmetev, Vasilii Dmitrev, Markel Mekhmedev, and Maksim Fedorov are unknown.

Sergeants Stepan Sumbatov (age 17), Vasilii Akhverdov (age 17), Fedor Akhverdov (age 15), Prince Vasilii Baratov (age 15), and Simon Surkhanov (age unknown) are all single.

Quartermaster Prince Stepan Baratov (age 11) is single.¹

Dragoon Melkom Kasparov, age 49, has a son Matos (age 12). He is not a member of the squadron.

Dragoon Mirzajan Hakopov, age 51, has two sons: Hakop (age 15) and Voskan (age 14). Neither of them are members of the squadron.

Dragoon Simon Gumarov, age 47, has two sons: Tatus (age 4) and Avakus (age 2). They are too young to serve.

Dragoon Kevork Gulasarov, age 58, has a son, Gregory (age 3).

¹The age of Stepan is listed as ten earlier in the same document. It is highly unlikely that Stepan was the chief quartermaster. He probably served as an apprentice or assistant.

Dragoons Shirmazan Baindarov, age 45, and Ivan Almazov age 12, are single.

The salaries of the squadron are as follows:

The lieutenant colonels receive 360 rubles per annum; majors, 300 rubles; captains, 180 rubles; lieutenants, 120 rubles; ensigns, 84 rubles; sergeants 17 rubles;¹ corporals and dragoons 15 rubles.

The lieutenant colonels receive 15 rations of fodder for winter; the majors, 13 rations; the captains, 7 rations, the lieutenants, 6 rations; the ensigns, 4 rations; and the sergeants, 2 rations.

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Artemii Lazarev to Empress Elizabeth

(18 January 1761)²

Artemii Lazarev, son of Nazaret, of the Julfa Company prostrates himself before Her Highness, Empress Elizabeth Petrovna, Autocrat of All Russia and begs the following:

My brother Lazar Nazarov and his partner the Armenian Avanjian Tomasov, son of Ablatov, were given capital and traded in the city of Basra in Turkey...

The events in Persia forced my brother and his family to seek refuge in Russia. They began manufacturing and their commercial activities benefited the treasury of Her Majesty... Our partners in Basra have inquired the possibility of transferring their capital and trade activities into Russia and not India. Other Armenian merchants from Julfa, Ivan Kasparov and Safar Khojamailov, who are in Basra, have also expressed interest in bringing their capital here. They request that Your Majesty instruct the Russian resident in Constantinople to assist them to transfer their funds from Babylon.³ I beg that Your Majesty accept my petition so that they may form a trading company in Russia...⁴

¹Actually 16 rubles and 80 kopeks.

²*AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1761), file 1, ff. 1-2.

³Baghdad and the rest of present-day Iraq were sometimes referred to as Babylon.

⁴Armenian merchants continued to petition Russia for permission to trade in Persia or to relocate their activities into Russia. For example see the petition of Ivan and Solomon Sergeevich to sell wheat to Persia (24 March 1761), *AVPR*, Russia's relations with Armenia (1758-1761), file 2, ff. 7-8.

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Joseph Emin's¹ Passport
(24 August 1761)²

From the Plenipotentiary Ambassador of His Imperial Majesty the Autocrat of All Russia to the Imperial Court of Great Britain, His Excellency, Prince Alexander Golitsyn,³ Knight of the Royal Polish Order of the White Eagle.⁴

Let it be known that I have granted the bearer, Iosif Emin, the Armenian, a passport to travel by ship to the Russian capital of St. Petersburg to attend to his private business. He is to travel freely through all the provinces of His Imperial Majesty of All Russia. The border commanders are instructed not to hinder Iosif Emin, but to assist him in every way possible to reach St. Petersburg. Confident that this will be done, I have personally signed the passport and have sealed it with my coat of arms. Issued in London on 24 August/4 September 1761.⁵

Seal

Knight Alexander Golitsyn

Passport was seen at the Livonian Provincial Headquarters on 11 October 1761 and registered in the record book of the chancery under number 370. Signed: Timofei Surovtsov, secretary.

Passport was presented to the commander at Dorpat on 21 October 1761. Passport was presented in Narva on 25 October 1761 and was registered under number 896 at the military post.

¹Hovsēp' Ēmin, who referred to himself in English as Joseph Ēmīn, was among the handful of Armenians, who in the eighteenth century began to envision an autonomous Armenian state, see commentary and biographical notes.

²The facsimile is in A. R. Ioannisian, *Iosif Emin* (Erevan, 1945), p. 88.

³He became the Vice Chancellor of Russia from 1762 to 1775.

⁴The Order of the White Eagle was one of the oldest Polish medals (reportedly going back to 1325). King Augustus II of Poland reintroduced it (in a new design) in 1705. The order was awarded primarily to a few foreign dignitaries among them Peter the Great. In 1831 it, together with the Order of St. Stanislaus, became a Russian insignia.

⁵Documents written by Russian officials outside Russia usually record both the Julian and Gregorian dates.

IV (1762-1796)¹

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Alexei Stupishin² to the Collegium of Foreign Affairs (14 August 1762)³

The Armenian Joseph Emin arrived here on 9 August and presented his travel documents issued to him by the chancery at Astrakhan. On August 10, he presented a letter from Neronov,⁴ the governor of Astrakhan, which stated that Emin could take twenty armed Armenian retainers for his trip to Persia via Kizliar. The letter also mentioned that Emin was highly recommended by Count Michael Larionovich Vorontsov.

The Armenians of Astrakhan have recognized him as belonging to a princely family. He has spent many years in various countries and has now arrived from England to Russia. He has numerous recommendations and an unlimited credit...

Although he is not known in Kizliar the Armenians have gathered around him, have kissed his hand, and have gone down on their knees before him...I did not like his behavior and did not trust his motives. I examined his passport⁵ and invited him to dinner. During dinner, in the presence of many officers, Emin bragged about his friendship with many distinguished citizens of St. Petersburg. He also stated that he had served in the Hanoverian army of Prince Ferdinand, had joined the British fleet,

¹Documents in this section cover the reign of Catherine II (the Great), which began on 26 June [7 July] 1762 and ended on 6 [17] November 1796. See biographical notes.

²Major General Alexei A. Stupishin was the commandant of Kizliar. Emin refers to him as General Stupition, J. Emin, *Life and Adventures of Joseph Emin, 1726-1809*, I (Calcutta, 1918), 182.

³*AVPR*, Internal Affairs Coll., group 2, file 3631, ff. 1-3.

⁴Vasilii Neronov.

⁵In his memoirs Emin states that the general made derogatory remarks about Peter the Second [actually Peter III], whose name appeared on Emin's passport. He also adds that the commandant was hostile to him, *Emin*, p. 182.

had fought the French, had helped to destroy 120 French ships, and had taken part in the battle of Kistrin alongside of the King of Prussia.¹

He then told me that he could not tell me the purpose of his trip to Persia and that I would realize its significance six months hence. When I told him that apart from the letter from the governor of Astrakhan I had no other information about him, he became bitter and stated that the Collegium of Foreign Affairs and Vice-Chancellor Golitsyn had promised to send letters on his behalf. He had waited in Astrakhan for two months but the change of government must have delayed their arrival.² Since he was not permitted to take cash to Persia he had goods which were trusted to him on credit. Tired of waiting, he had proceeded to Kizliar and had no intention of waiting here. After dinner he send word through an officer in the Armenian squadron, Sumbatov, that while in England he was recognized as a Persian prince. He reiterated this statement to Colonel Deboksberg of the Samara Regiment. He added that his mission was secret and if the Muslims found out about it his life would have little value. He added that he wished only to visit the Georgian King Erekle.

I visited him the next day and he repeated his statements adding that his mission is to the benefit of the Russian State. He also stated that although he was a prince, he traveled incognito until the Armenian nation recognized him as their leader. That was the reason he traveled in simple dress and without money.

I have been careful in my dealings with Emin...He may deal with the Asiatics without our knowledge...He speaks Turkish, Persian, and Armenian. I have detained him on the pretext that I am waiting for an official letter from the State. He has constantly demanded to be permitted to travel and on the pretext of his high position I have assigned a guard to watch over his movements.

Today he asked to be permitted to return to St. Petersburg. He added that he was tired of waiting and stated that he wished to leave his Armenian retainers here and take only his two personal guards with him. I was prepared for this and have dispatched him to the governor of Astrakhan who will decide on the proper action...³

¹Refers to Frederick II.

²Refers to the removal of Peter III and the ascension of Catherine II.

³On 4 September the Astrakhan chancery wrote to the Collegium of Foreign Affairs that Emin had arrived in Astrakhan and had demanded permission to travel to Persia with his two Armenian guards, Moses Bogdanov of Hamadan

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Erekle II to Joseph Emin

(14 November 1762)¹

My friend, Vardapet Zakaria of Erevan has delivered your letters and gifts. I thank you for your message of condolence regarding my late father [T'eimuraz II]. Concerns your inquiry about not receiving any invitations from me for you to visit Georgia, I did not know where to send them—to Smyrna, England, or Russia? I am glad of your loyalty to me, wish you good health, and await your arrival.

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Tarkhan Markarov to Joseph Emin

(16 November 1762)²

I inform you that I arrived in the capital city of Tiflis on Friday October 17th with 30 men. King Erekle expected to see you and when I gave him your letter he expressed his joy. He was saddened, however, when he found out that you had returned to Russia. He then summoned me and asked me about you. I secretly informed him of your plan. He replied, "We shall see what God has destined and what will happen."

As to the conditions here: The cities of Ganja and Erevan are under the control of Erekle. Although the city of Jar rose against him, plans for reconciliation are in the works. Karīm Khan Zand has attacked Fath 'Alī Khan in the city of Urumiye. Eleven of Karīm's commanders betrayed him and planned to join Fath 'Alī. Their letter was intercepted, however. They were arrested and although two managed to escape and join Fath 'Alī, the rest were beheaded. Erekle is a good friend of Karīm Khan. A courier from the latter arrived with letters and gifts and asked that Erekle send his son, Sardar Revaz and Āzād Khan to Karīm Khan. Erekle responded that his son was too young and Āzād Khan was his guest. He did, however, send three notables with gifts and letters to Karīm Khan. A

and Stepan Ovanesov of Constantinople. Emin had requested an armed convoy to transport him to Ossetia through the mountains populated by Muslims, *AVPR*, Internal Affairs Coll., group 2, file 3631, ff. 5-8. On 30 October Emin wrote to the Collegium complaining about the conduct of Stupishin and asking permission to go to Armenia or Georgia, *ibid.*, f. 18.

¹*AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Persia (1763-1767), file 13, f. 12.

²*Ibid.*, ff. 76-77.

number of Armenians from the *seghnaghs*, who resided in Tiflis, have been stationed at Shamkhor. Karīm Khan has met with Panāh Khan and has named him *sardar* (commander of the army).¹ Panāh's son rules a small town that is called Ishugagöl.² The Patriarch of Gandzasar has arrived in Ganja. There are monasteries in Gandzasar and Ējmiatsin and they enjoy the favor of Erekle...

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Vasilii Neronov to the Collegium of Foreign Affairs(29 November 1762)³

On 27 November Prince Otar Tumanov informed me that Eruk, an Armenian from Tiflis had arrived from Persia and had reported that the pasha of Baghdad, Suleiman, had died in 1762. Following his death there was great turmoil in the city and the population of the region had risen in rebellion and had shed each other's blood. He also reported that some of the Armenians of the *seghnaghs*, together with their wives and children had relocated to Georgia and were living in Haghpāt and Bolnīs. The reason for this migration is not clear.⁴

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Passport Issued to Joseph Emin(29 November 1762)⁵

By the Order of Her Imperial Majesty, Empress Catherine Alekseevna, Autocrat of All Russia, etc. etc. etc.

To whoever examines this passport, be it known that the Armenian Joseph Emin and his servant Moses Varlamov, together with all their possessions have the permission to leave Russia via Astrakhan and

¹The document confirms Panāh Khan was still alive in 1762. Karīm Khan confirmed Ebrāhīm as the new khan and took Panāh to Shiraz in 1763 as a hostage, where he died several years later, see Bournoutian, *Qarabagh*, pp. 81-82, n. 211.

²Refers to Ebrāhīm Khan Ĵavānšīr, who ruled parts of Karabagh since 1761.

³AVPR, Russia's Relations with Persia (1762-1767), file 10, f. 51.

⁴Ebrāhīm had begun his gradual campaign to extend his authority over all of Karabagh.

⁵AVPR, Internal Affairs Coll., group 2, file 3631, f. 24. The passport was delivered to Ivan Lazarev in St. Petersburg..

Kizliar. This passport is to provide them freedom of movement throughout Russia and exit through Russian borders.
Count Michael Vorontsov

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Senate Decree

(28 May 1763)¹

The State Senate, following the recommendation of the Manufacturing Collegium, has approved the petition of Prince Nicholas Saakadze, a lieutenant in the Georgian Hussar Regiment. He may proceed to build, at his own expense, a silk factory near Kizliar. He may use 250 *sazhen*² of state land for this purpose and hire 10 workers...The Kizliar State Chancery should aid him in purchasing the necessary materials and help him plant the needed mulberry trees...It has been reported that Saakadze was at a very advanced age and that he could not even recognize the people around him. At first the Senate was inclined to refuse his petition, but a number of Armenians and Georgians in Kizliar have indicated that they would do the work for Saakadze. It is decreed, therefore, that he may establish silk works and that he may hire local Armenians or Georgians to work there. It is forbidden, however for Saakadze to use the land for any other purpose, except manufacturing silk. He is to utilize the labor of free men with passports and not that of serfs.

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Senate Decree

(9 June 1763)³

The decree of 16 May 1745 denied the petitions of the Armenians of Moscow to construct a stone church, the petition of the Armenians of St. Petersburg for a similar church, and the petition of the Armenians of Astrakhan to build a wooden church. On 4 December 1762 Her Imperial Majesty issued a manifesto which stated that since numerous foreigners had asked her to immigrate to Russia, she has consented that all of them, including her non-Orthodox subjects—except the Jews—be permitted to build their own houses of worship...The State Senate, therefore, has

¹PSZR, XVI, no. 11835.

²Each *sazhen* equals 2.13 meters.

³SAAN, I, 172-173, PSZR, XVI, 287-289.

given a positive response to the petitions of the Armenians of Moscow, St. Petersburg, and Astrakhan to construct their own churches there. Copies of this decree, issued at St. Petersburg, have been forwarded to the chief of police of Moscow, as well as to the State Chancery at Astrakhan.

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Decree of Catherine the Great(25 September 1763)¹

The Armenian Moses Sarafov² has promised to cultivate orchards in the Astrakhan province for the purpose of silk production. Since this action is beneficial to Russia, I order that he be given as much land as he needs provided that it does not belong to Russian subjects. He is also to receive a loan for 10,000 rubles, interest-free for ten years. He is permitted to purchase 300 serfs for this project.

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Vardapet Hovnan³ to Joseph Emin(1763)⁴

The bearer Melih Stepan of this place, of the province of Curdistan in Armenia, will bring you this letter; you will receive from him 600 Zarmabab⁵ zekins,⁶ to defray your little journey expences (*sic*), and make your coming to us as expeditious as possible. Desire the prince (Erekle), with God's blessing and my prayers, to give you twenty Georgian horse, for the satisfaction of the people here, and for their assurance that he is your friend. Should he be prevented by the enemies of union [Armeno-Georgian], from complying with your request, never mind it; God will do you justice; but do not backward in receiving the sum abovementioned; take it and spend it at your pleasure; when you the prince will not favour

¹PSZR, XVI, no. 11937.

²Movsēs Sarafean, also known as Moses Buniatov, was a wealthy merchant and entrepreneur in the Astrakhan region.

³Vardapet Hovnan (Emin calls him Jonas) was the head of the Surb Karapet (St. John the Baptist) Monastery in Mush.

⁴*Emin*, I, 234-235.

⁵From the Turkish *zer-i mahbub*, Ottoman gold coin worth 25 *kurush*.

⁶From *sikke* or *sekke* meaning coin.

you with his assistance, make yourself easy, think nothing of it. I received your letters mentioning the malicious proceeding of those wolves who pretend outwardly to be the disciples of our Savior, but who have always been instrumental in the downfall of our harmless nation, and who are no better than tools in the hands of infidels. I have been working for eleven months past by writing, and have very easily brought over to your interest and heroic way of thinking, all the great Armenians in Turkey, Constantinople, Smyrna, Caisary, Tokhat, Arzerum, Diarbeker, Vuer, &c., &c.—they are citizens. As for fighting men, you shall have 40,000 to meet you at the end of six days journey; the Assyrians and Yezdy Curds¹ are likewise ready to join us. Do not say to the Georgian prince that they must have money; for to make you more composed in mind, they have all taken oaths on the holy scripture, and by the bloody cross of our blessed Savior, that they will fight under your command ten years, without any expectation of money; as for provisions and ammunition, they likewise have their own well provided. The Turks are not the same as they were a hundred years ago; without fighting, they will give up all; and as their towns are not fortified, you may suppose the taking of them will be very easy. A superstitious prophecy has taken root in their minds, that their sovereignty is near its end, and that their fighting against Christians will be of no signification. They have also heard of your coming from the Russian empire, strongly recommended by its blessed Empress to the prince of Georgia, and the Turks will never dare to shed a Christian's blood; that since your coming from England by the way of the Mediterranean, three years have elapsed, and that, when you exhorted the people of the villages you passed through, every Armenian betook himself to arms; that even women were ready to fight, provided Heraclius (Erekle) would engage to stand by you. Let this suffice in writing. If you should not succeed with Heraclius, my fatherly advice is, that you never despair, but go on with all your might, fear no manner of danger, put your trust in God; whether you succeed or not, you will have fame: but I am in hopes you will be the means of freeing your poor distressed countrymen from the chain of subjection and from affliction...

¹Yezidi Kurds.

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Mirzabek Vaganov's petition to Catherine the Great
(February 1764)¹

In 1758 I, together with my wife and children and other members of my family left Persia and arrived in Kizliar. In 1759 we petitioned the Senate to become Russian subjects. I, together with my son, as well as my nephew and his son, requested to enter the service of Russia. We were given land and homes, plowed fields and grew hay.² I requested to be given the same rank I possessed under Nāder Shah... In 1759, following our petitions, Councilor Bratishchev wrote to the Astrakhan chancery and I was given the rank of major in the Kizliar Squadron. My nephew was given the rank of ensign and his son that of sergeant. We were provided with salaries and provisions. In 1763 the commandant of Kizliar, Stupishin, sent me to Persia to gather confidential information... My health and age no longer permit me to undertake such activities and I request that Your Majesty allow me to serve as a regular staff officer in the squadron under the command of Prince Tumanov.

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The Composition of the Georgian and Armenian Squadrons
(12 March 1764)³

Georgian Squadron: Colonels (1), Lieutenant Colonels (1), Majors (1), Captains (7), Lieutenants (1), Ensigns (13), Quartermasters (1), Sergeants (10), Corporals (1), and Dragoons (2), for a total of 38 men. They receive a total salary of 4,769 rubles per annum in cash and rations.

Armenian Squadron: Majors (1), Captains (2), Lieutenants (2), Sergeants (4), and Dragoons (3), for a total of 12 men. They receive 1,223 rubles

¹AVPR, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1767-1768), file 1, f. 4-5.

²A document dated 11 January 1766 lists other Armenians who were given land in the Kizliar region: Sahak Tsaturov and his 12 companions received 55 *desiatins* near the Old Terek River; Sargis Martirosov and his friends received 273.25 *desiatins* in the same area; T'eimuraz Bogdanov was allocated 64 *sazhen*; Iosif Ivanov received 41 *sazhen*. A number of other Armenians were also allocated land by the commandant of Kizliar, General Nicholas Alekseevich Potapov, see *Kabardino-russkie otnosheniia v XVI-XVIII vv.* II (Moscow, 1957), 255-257.

³TsGVIA, Coll. 23, group 1/121, file 108, f. 8.

per annum in cash and rations. The total number of both squadrons stationed in Kizliar is 50 men receiving 5,992 rubles in cash and produce.¹

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Kat'oghikos Simēon² to Erekle II
(25 March 1764)³

I have received three letters from Your Highness but have not been able to respond because I did not have a trusted man to deliver them...Sargis Vardapet has been in Georgia for five years, He should have returned three years ago...⁴The gentlemen in question (Emin) employs two or three men, who came here and made outrageous statements. The Armenians and Muslims heard this. Some made fun of it, while others made plans to harm us because of it. One of these men, a Mahdesi Grigor, came to Erevan and had a fight with the men of the khan. They beat him, undressed him, and took his papers to the khan and others. He had two letters, one from Emin and the other from Your Highness. Both were addressed to Hovnan Vardapet of St. Karapet Monastery. They brought the letters to us and we saw your seal and were amazed. We told them that your seal was forged...My messenger, Ter Gabriyēl, was present and will explain the episode in detail to Your Highness. I wish to inform Your Highness that such stupid individuals should not use your name and seal. They cause more harm than good. I write because I love and respect Your Highness. Who is Hovnan that you should write to him, and why use such a stupid messenger, who shows the letter to everyone? Please review the situation and inform Emin that he should keep his men at his side. He has to realize that our land is in the hands of the infidels and such behavior will bring great grief for our nation. Ter Gabriyēl will recount the rest.

¹The document makes it clear that the squadrons had shrunk considerably. A few months later, both squadrons were disbanded, see doc. 281.

²Kat'oghikos at Ējmiatsin (1763-1780), see biographical notes.

³MAAC, Archives of the Kat'oghikosate, file 2, ff. 8-9.

⁴Sargis Vardapet had collected money in Astrakhan. Simēon wanted him to return to Ējmiatsin and give an account of the sum collected.

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Consul Igumnov¹ to Nikita Beketov²
(30 March 1764)³

The state of commerce in this country has deteriorated greatly. There are practically no merchants left in the region...Russian merchants transfer their goods from Astrakhan to Indian or Armenian merchants who are scattered in the region and who control the trade to the detriment of our merchants...I request that you order that the Armenians of Astrakhan be forbidden of having Persian citizens as their sales representatives. They should use Russian citizens as commercial agents so that I could have more control over them. Presently Persian Armenians using Russian capital and promissory notes travel all over Persia. Russian merchants do not have the same privilege. For example, Andrei Biriukov, a merchant from Astrakhan, requested to import fish from the Sefidrud River and asked me to write to the local khan for a permit. By the time he reached Rasht, a Persian Armenian in the service of Khach'atur Ivanov, an Armenian from Astrakhan, had managed to transfer that right into his own hands.⁴

I have also received a letter from Tabriz, written by an Armenian from Tiflis...It states that the Ottomans have gathered a 100,000-strong army and are threatening to attack Georgia...

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Governor Beketov to the War Collegium
(17 May 1764)⁵

I have received Her Majesty's order (no. 6384) to the War Collegium, dated 10 May, regarding the disbanding of the two Armenian and Geor-

¹Il'ia Igumnov was the Russian Consul in Enzeli.

²Nikita Afonas'evich Beketov was the Governor of Astrakhan.

³*AVPR*, Russia's relations with Persia (1762-1767), file 10, ff. 85, 93.

⁴Russo-Persian trade via Astrakhan suffered a major decline after the death of Nāder Shah. It revived only in the 1780s. The main reason for the decline was the political conditions in Persia as well as the arrival of English merchants and not the activities of the Armenian merchants, see A. I. Iukht, "Torgovlia Rossii so stranami Vostoka vo vtoroi polovine XVIII v. i Armianskoe kupechestvo," *Patma-banasirakan handes*, 2 (1981), 87-88.

⁵*TsGVIA*, Coll. 13, group 1/107, file 125, f. 105.

gian squadrons in Kizliar. I shall carry out the order the moment I return to Astrakhan.¹

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Kat'oghikos Simēon to Consul Igumnov

(10 June 1764)²

Armenian subjects of Russia have sent me letters via Tabriz stating that Your Excellency has spread rumors that the Turks are planning to do battle with the people of the Ararat province. This is not true. You may have already heard that in 1763 the Turks did send a rather large force to Bashachug.³ They were defeated and fled in disorder. There have been no hostile acts on their part since then. Only God knows what will happen in the future. Be assured, however, that we are not afraid to correspond with you and shall keep you informed.

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Decree of Catherine the Great

(13 January 1765)⁴

The Armenians residing in the Astrakhan Province are to have their own court, which will observe the Armenian code of laws. They have resided in Russia for a long time and have conducted trade here... They have had the privilege of having their own court for some time⁵ and it is impossible to alter that decision. We decree that they continue to enjoy that privilege... We have decreed that Christians, Muslims, and Indians are to live

¹Active members of the squadrons joined various Russian units until 1770; some of them were promoted and received decorations for their services, see *ibid.*, ff. 127-128, 158-160, 164-165, 190-199, 492-493, 968-971, 982-987. On 10 November 1766, Governor Beketov submitted a final report on the squadrons. The list includes those who had died (Taga Kuzanov), those who had retired, and those who had transferred to other units, *ibid.*, ff. 118-125.

²*AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Persia (1764), file 87, f. 64.

³The term used for Imeret'i, which was ruled by King Solomon I (1752-1784).

⁴*PSZR*, XVII, no. 12307.

⁵The Senate gave them that right on 14 September 1746 and an Armenian court was established in Astrakhan in 1747. The Armenian law code of Astrakhan has been examined in F. G. Poghosyan's *Datastanagirk Astrakhani Hayots* (Erevan, 1967).

according to their own beliefs. They are thus to have their own assemblies, administered by their own people...We desire that these unbelievers be treated gently and assimilate gradually and not be forced to swiftly abandon their way of life.

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Kat'oghikos Simēon to Catherine the Great(22 July 1766)¹

God the Ruler of the Universe has made Your Majesty the ruler of Christians...I am putting aside my pain to inform you that the Muslims have taken over our Body and have hurt our Soul. I am not able to reach all my subjects. We have lost our kingdom and are now in danger of losing our faith. Your majesty is aware that our nation has only one Holy See, which started with Gregory the Illuminator, The patriarchal seat is at Vagharshapat, at the Holy See of Ējmiatsin. All Armenians of the world, wherever they may be and whatever vardapets or bishops they may have, are subject to us. All their Church affairs have to be approved by us. We have no kings and our people are scattered. Our religious laws and authority has, therefore, been usurped. There are, in places far from here, men who have undermined our authority and have removed us from our people. They have received rank of vardapet and bishop without our knowledge, which is contrary to the regulations of our Church. They have given bribes and with the help of local magnates have received the title of prelate. Some of them are not even Armenian, but lean toward the Catholic or Lutheran faith. The actions of such people hurt our Church. We have always received acknowledgements from the Ottoman and Persian rulers, who have recognized us as the Supreme Patriarchs (caliphs). They view us as the leaders of our people...There are Armenians who live under your rule who are enjoying material success. They came from Shemakhi, Julfa, Erevan, Nakhichevan, Tiflis and other places. Although they live in your land and have to obey you, they are subject to our Church, the successor of St. Gregory. We used to have a bishop in Russia to take care of them and to rule over them spiritually. It is now 16 or 17 years since we have had any representative in Russia for the Armenian

¹MAAC, MS. 2912, ff. 138-139. A certain Vardapet Dawit' carried the letter. On 29 January 1767 the governor of Astrakhan, Beketov, asked the Collegium of Foreign Affairs to allow Dawit' to proceed to St. Petersburg, *AVPR*, Russia's relations with Armenia (1767-1768), file 1, f. 3.

living there.¹ Our bishops cannot travel to minister the Russian Armenians. Usurpers dispatch bishops, who do not know our rite and who are not respectable individuals. No one knows where have they studied and what their qualifications are. They come and do whatever they want, spreading incorrect doctrine. Our bishops are the only ones who are forbidden to enter Russia. We do not know the reason for this—who ordered this and why. We know that the order came from Your Majesty's government. Is Your Majesty's government aware of what is happening? I submit my complaint to the throne and seek justice. The Armenian prelate in Russia has to obey the Holy See of Ējmiatsin and no one else. Since Your Church honors St. Gregory, we implore that you pay heed to our petition. Please decree that we should appoint any prelate of the Armenians in Russia and that he should obey us. Order that no other bishop be appointed prelate without our knowledge.

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Mirzabek Vaganov to Commandant K. von Rosenberg of Astrakhan
(2 June 1767)²

I have received the following confidential news from various individuals traveling in Persia:

The *Vakīl*, Karīm Khan, is alive and well and is living in the city of Shiraz. His main enemy, Taqī Khan, was in Kerman. Karīm's nephew, 'Alī Moḥammad Khan and his forces attacked Kerman and took Taqī Khan prisoner. The Arabs, Nāṣer Khan and Mirman, have not yet been subdued by Karīm. Karīm Khan has not reached an agreement with Erekle either and is waiting an opportune moment to move on Georgia. Hedāyat Khan still rules Gilan. The Georgian prince, Alexander Bakarov, who left Russia in 1766, lives in Rasht as a guest of Hedāyat Khan. The two, accompanied by 300 men, came to Enzeli and took Shubin, an interpreter, and Vasilii Abramov, an Armenian from Astrakhan, both of whom worked for the Russian consulate, under guard to Rasht...At present there is no plague in Persia, save in the region between Derbent and Baku, where a number of people have become sick and have died.

¹Empress Elizabeth's policy against non-Orthodox Christians was responsible for this.

²*AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Persia (1767-1769), file 16, ff. 22-23.

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Catherine the Great to Kat'oghikos Simēon(30 June 1768)¹

Our Imperial greetings to the most honorable Patriarch, Simēon, the honorable yūzbaşıs, meliks, and all the honest Armenian People. We extend Our favor to you. We announce that Patriarch Simēon of Greater Armenia, who resides in Vagharshapat, has sent a letter via his representative Dawit' to Moscow. He has requested that We send him a decree stating Our friendship so that he may display it in his monastery. Since Our illustrious ancestors Peter the Great and Catherine Alekseevna favored the honest Armenian Christians and granted similar decrees (in 1724 and 1726) to the then Patriarchs Esayi and Nestor (Nersēs),² the Armenian yūzbaşıs, meliks, and the Armenian people, We too extend Our favor to Patriarch Simēon and to all the future patriarchs who will occupy his throne... We also announce that Our Armenian subjects may continue to worship according to their own rite. Therefore, if the Armenian subjects of Russia request that an archbishop be sent from Vagharshapat to administer to their needs, the patriarch may do so without any hindrance from the Russian administration. We have informed Our governors and border commandants of Our decision... We thank the Patriarch for sending us relics belonging to St. John the Baptist, the Holy Martyr Rhipsimē, St. Gregory the Illuminator, and part of Noah's Ark and receive them with gratitude. We send Vardapet Dawit' back to the Holy See with Our Decree extending special favor and kindness to the Armenian people.³

¹MAAC, Archives of the Kat'oghikosate, file 3, doc. 7a; also in SAAN, I, 173-175.

²Kat'oghikos Esayi Hasan-Jalalean (1702-1728) and Kat'oghikos Nersēs V (1706-1763), see Chapter III and biographical notes.

³In August of that year Nikita Panin send a letter to Simēon stating that Her Majesty and the Russian State have a special affection for the Armenian people. He included 31.5 *arshins* of gold-embroidered velvet and 134 *arshins* of gold-embroidered lace, SAAN, III, 319-320; MAAC, Archives of the Kat'oghikosate, file 3, doc. 7.

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Consul G. S. Bogoliubov¹ to Governor Beketov
(20 October 1768)²

I am sending you a copy of the statement signed by Armenian merchants, which demonstrates the extremes they have been reduced to because of loans borrowed from Persians. I declare that the Armenians are at fault for the late departure of the boat from Enzeli and not I. I had send the necessary papers to Rasht, but the Armenians delayed their departure until the stormy season and suffered the consequences.

Their boat was caught in the storm, lost its rudder, and they were forced to anchor at Saliyan. The boat was severely damaged and the owner lost a considerable sum. The Persian owner claims that our consulate is responsible. The merchants, in the meantime, are planning to send more boats to Astrakhan but refuse to spend a kopek on resolving this problem...³

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Governor Beketov to the Collegium of Foreign Affairs
(2 May 1769)⁴

Sukias Evazov, an Armenian from Ararat Province has informed me that the Turkish Sultan⁵ has sent letters to Karīm Khan asking him to declare war on us. The message states that we are planning to conquer Tabriz, Ganja, Shemakhi, Kuba, Derbent, and Ararat and force the Muslims living there to obey Christian rulers. Same messages were sent to the people of Daghestan and the Muslim rulers bordering Russia, including Georgia, Faṭḥ ‘Alī Khan of Derbent, the Shamkhal Usmai and the khans of

¹Russian consul in Enzeli.

²*AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Persia (1768), file 111, ff. 57-58.

³The attached statement signed by 18 Armenian merchants blamed the consul for the delay, which forced them to sail in October, during the stormy season. The signatures are as follows: Hairapet Afonas'ev, David Moiseev, Zakar Movsesov, Sargis Manukov, Tsatur Matosov, Nikoghos Cherkisov, Voskan Sukiasov, Grigor Turcheninov, Ovsep Tumanov, Harutiun Khorasanov, Kaivan Vlasov, Minas Kirakosov, Ovanes Buniatov, Artemii Khristoforov, Martiros Nikitin, Avet Sahakov, Bejan Revazov, and Gurgen Ivanov.

⁴*AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Persia (1767-1769), file 16, ff. 277-280.

⁵Sultan Mustafa III (1757-1774).

Kabarda. Evazov tells me that while he was in Derbent he saw two envoys from the Turkish Sultan. He was informed that they told Fath 'Alī Khan to join their common cause against Russia and not to permit Russian troops to enter Persia from the Caspian. Evazov adds that while in the land of the Shamkhal, in Tarku, he was a guest of an elder, Hājji Moḥammad, who informed him that while he was in Shemakhi he had heard that Fath 'Alī Khan had delayed his answer.

The Turkish Sultan has also written to Solomon of Imeret'i,¹ asking him to join forces with the Turks. He added that although the Turks had invaded Imeret'i in the past, it was done without his knowledge. The grand vizier was at fault for those incursions. He assured him that from now on there will be peace between them and he will be accorded special favors.²

Karīm Khan had asked the English and French companies trading in Persia to give him heavy coarse cloth for his soldiers in exchange for silk. The companies refused and demanded payment. Karīm Khan became angry and ordered the Persians to cease cash payments for European products. They have turned to the barter system. Karīm Khan has announced that since the Russian merchants have no problem exchanging silk for their products, he will send all the Persian silk to Gīlān, where Russian merchants have their wares...

Azaria Samurov, an Armenian from Derbent, has informed us that Fath 'Alī Khan is in Shemakhi with his army. He has gone there to fight against his enemy, Ḥosein Khan of Shakki. Hosein Khan, in the meantime, has sent envoys with gifts to Erekle asking his help. Erekle has sent an envoy to Fath 'Alī Khan to make peace with Ḥosein Khan or to face the Georgian army.

Bagdasar, a Persian Armenian, informs that while in Ganja, as a guest of the Armenian merchant Gaspar, he witnessed a letter from Gaspar's brother from Constantinople stating that there is lack of bread in that city and that three pounds of grain sells for 3 rubles and 50 kopeks...³

¹Solomon I (1752-1765, 1768-1784).

²The Russo-Turkish War of 1768-1774 was not going well for the Turks. They hoped that military action in the Caucasus and Persia would divert Russian troops from Europe.

³On 18 May 1769 Bogoliubov reported to the Collegium of Foreign Affairs that word of the Russian victories against the Turks had spread in Persia, *AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Persia, file 106, ff. 57-60.

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Moses Sarafov's Project

(8 June 1769)¹

Since the Russian empire is at war with the Turks, I propose that the war be extended to the Asiatic side as well. I have lived, traveled and traded in Persia, Turkey and the Ararat region and can attest to the fact that the Christians there are ready to throw off the yoke of Muslim rule the moment Russian troops appear...The Russian government has to take the following steps to encourage the Armenians to rise against the Turks: 1-Send troops via the Caspian Sea into Persia—follow the steps of His Late Imperial Majesty, Peter the Great. 2-Send Russian troops to Georgia.

If the two Georgian kings unite and join Russia, then Russia could send artillery experts and officers to teach the Georgians to copy Russian military techniques. Georgian soldiers are brave but they are used to defend fortresses and are not familiar with fighting in the ravines...The Armenians living in Moscow, Astrakhan, Kizliar, and Mozdok will volunteer and join their compatriots in the various Russian military units. Those Armenians who have wives and children here can be trusted and should be recruited to take messages to the Armenian meliks and patriarchs. They can travel in the guise of merchants. Such an Armenian army can be financed by Armenian capital and dispatched to Tiflis...²

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*Erekle II to Count Panin*³

(14 June 1769)⁴

1. Akhaltsikhe was part of ancient Georgia and its people were Greek Orthodox. The Turks are in control of it for some time and the peo-

¹*AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Georgia, group 110/2, file 2, ff. 89-90.

²The copy of this proposal was sent to Count Panin and to Bakunin. Although they did not take it seriously, they did ask Count Mouravov to ask the king of Imeret'i about the strength of Armeno-Georgian relations and their willingness to cooperate in any future plans, *ibid.*, f. 93. Document 290 indicates that Panin sought more information about the proposal. Like the Turks, Russia also wished to create problems on the Asiatic borders of her enemy.

³Nikita Ivanovich Panin was a close advisor of Catherine. He was the head of the Collegium of Foreign Affairs from 1763 to 1781, see biographical notes.

⁴*Gramoty*, I, 433-438.

ple have converted to Islam. A part of that province, however, still has a Christian population. Its vizier, who has the rank of three tails,¹ can muster up to 5,000 troops but most are not reliable...

2. The city of Kars is near Mt. Ararat. The region belongs to the Armenians. Its population is composed of Armenians and Muslims. There are a few Greeks inhabitants as well. The land is devoid of trees. Its pasha has the rank of two tails and can deploy up to 2,000 men. The villages of that province are scattered. Some are within our borders and others have been raided by the Lesghians.
3. A pasha with the rank of two tails, who can bring some 1,500 men to battle, rules the city of Bayazid. The land belongs to the Armenians. The population is largely Armenian. The region is near Mt. Ararat and borders Salmas.
4. The city of Erevan and its province belongs to the Armenians. Its governor is a Persian and the Armenian patriarch resides there. Its population is mostly Armenians. In the last few years they have suffered raids from Lesghians and other Muslims. We have been their protectors. Although the Persian khan can muster some 2,000 troops, the majority of the people are not fighters.
5. The city of Ganja and its environs is part of Persia. They share a common border with us. Its population is primarily Armenian. The khan is autonomous and can gather some 3,000 troops. It borders Shirvan, Karabagh (*khamse*) Erevan, as well as Georgia. Its khan was overthrown by his neighbors and was reinstated by us. He is, therefore, our subject. Since they live in close proximity to the Lesghians, we have a number of hostages from his family to assure his loyalty.
6. Seven families rule the region of *khamse*. Its population is totally Armenian. An Armenian Patriarch resides there as well. After the death of the Shah [Nāder] a Muslim from that region, from the Ĵavānşīr tribe, came to power. He betrayed them and took hold of an old fort. We aided the Armenians against the Ĵavānşīrs and at present there is peace between them. The Armenians live in high mountain fortified ravines. The Ĵavānşīr have some 2,500 troops while the

¹The pashas sent to the provinces before the *Tanzimat* were generally divided into three groups; three horse-tails (*tuğ*) was the standard of the viziers, two horse-tails was reserved for the *mir-mirans* (sometimes *beylerbeys*), and one horse tail for the *sanjakbey*.

Armenians have 4,500 men in arms...The Armenian fighters are brave but their leaders do not get along...

7. The khan of Kuba has the Lesghians on his side. He controls Derbent, Baku, and Saliyan. He, like Surkhai Khan of Shemakhi and Shirvan, once served the Turkish Sultan and attacked his neighbors to extend his domain. He is presently at peace with them.
8. The Kumuk chief, Sulkhav has concluded a verbal peace with us, but his subjects are bandits, His father, during his lifetime, received financial aid from the Turkish Sultan. The brother of Sulkhav lives in Constantinople as a guest of the Sultan...
9. The khan of Shakki's grandfather was called Hājji C'ēlēbi. His father was an Armenian priest who converted to Islam and who somehow took over Shakki. In olden days Shakki belonged to the kings of Kakhet'i. It was taken from him by Shah 'Abbās I. Many Armenians live there and are free to practice their religion. Our Orthodox brothers, however, are forced to practice their faith secretly. Although there was some conflict between us in the past, we are currently at peace. They can muster up to 3,000 men in time of war.
10. Prince 'Alī Soltān, who was a subject of Kakhet'i, became a Muslim during the reign of Shah 'Abbās I. His domain lies west of Kakhet'i.
11. Autonomous tribes populate the regions called Tamin, Chinizh, Jar, and Belokan. They are also the protectors of the Tarakam people, who have a small number of Christians among them. In olden days they were subjects of the king of Kakhet'i and served him. Their lands were burned by Shah 'Abbās I, who populated them with Tatars and Lesghians. Some of the people of these regions are at peace with us others are not. They can gather up to 6,000 men in arms.
12. The Prince of Khunzakh lives in the Lesghian highlands and has 1,500 men. If he gathers the Lesghians his army will reach 16,000 men. They attacked us a number of times and were thrown back suffering heavy losses...
13. West of Kakhet'i lie four regions called Diodeti, Kisti, Gligvi, and Zazurzuki. The Lesghians have converted these regions to Islam and are trying to dominate the Tush, Pshav, Khevsur, and Khev peoples who live along the route between Russia and Georgia...
14. There is a good possibility to widen the Khev road, not from the Russian side but from our side.
15. The Persian Karīm Khan lives in Shiraz. Persia is divided into four regions: Azerbaijan, Arak ['Arāq-e 'Ajam], Parsistan [Fars], and

Khorasan. There are also the provinces of Gilan, Mazandaran, and Hamadan. Karīm Khan rules over part of Azerbaijan, Arak is loyal to him, he has no control over Khorasan, and he totally controls Parsistan. Gilan, Mazandaran, and Hamadan are under his protection. He has friendly relations with us.

16. The Syrians (Assyrians) who live under Turkish rule are Christians and have sent representatives asking us to permit them to move *en-masse* to our land. The moment Russian forces appear in this region we can rely on the help of the Syrian Christians...¹

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*Catherine the Great to Governor Voeikov*²
(16 November 1769)³

The Wallachians, Greeks, Armenians, Raskolniks,⁴ and Jews who were sent to Russia by the First army during our war with the Turks should be treated kindly and not as prisoners. They are to be settled within the territory of the empire, in the Ekaterinskii Province, in the Ukraine [Maloi Rossii], in the Moldavian Hussar Regiment, or other regions where their individual talents may be utilized...The Jews, however, should only be settled in the Novorossiisk Guberniia (province).

¹Erekle sent the Armenian bishop Esayi to Bayazid to talk with the Assyrians and the Yezidis and to assess their willingness and preparedness to rebel against the Turks, *AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Georgia (1770), file 12, f. 131; *Gramoty*, II (pt. 2), 259. On 4 September Erekle wrote to Panin asking for five regiments instead of the fifteen promised by General Totleben. He added that the Turks had not brought any troops to the border and that there were many Christians in Kars and Akhaltsikhe who wished to overthrow Turkish rule. With Russian help he could reclaim his rights over the region by the Black Sea, *AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Georgia (1769), file 12, ff. 290-291.

²F. M. Voeikov was the governor-general of Kiev.

³*PSZR*, XVIII, no. 13383.

⁴Russian schismatics or "Old Believers," who had left Russia because of persecutions during the second half of the 17th century. They settled in the Danubian provinces (Romania). Catherine invited them to return and promised them an undisturbed life. Many returned and settled in the regions east of the Volga. They were persecuted once more in the 19th century and some of them ended up in Canada.

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Senate Decree

(17 November 1769)¹

Grigorii Kampanov, an Armenian from Astrakhan has petitioned the Senate stating the following: Armenians from Persia came to Astrakhan in 1711, 1723, 1724, and 1726 and have enriched the city with their commerce...Armenian merchants have paid a total of 1,339 rubles a year for the upkeep of the army barracks...In 1763 the Persian Armenian Moses Sarafov was given permission to construct a vessel to sail on the Caspian Sea. The Astrakhan merchants, however, petitioned the governor to forbid him or any other Armenian from building ships...Although the governor of Astrakhan has claimed that Armenians would take goods to Persia illegally, he has offered no proof of this. His only example is Ivan Stolarev, a Russian subject who has converted to Islam and who, with the aid of Hedāyat Khan of Rasht, has obtained a vessel and is conducting trade which is detrimental to our Armenian merchants...Her Majesty's decrees of 1762 and 1763 clearly state that all Russian subjects living in Astrakhan are permitted to construct vessels for the purposes of trade on the Caspian Sea. The Senate orders that the governor of Astrakhan substantiate his reasons for his refusal to grant that privilege to the Armenians.

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Decree of the Chief of Police of St. Petersburg

(22 May 1770)²

Her Imperial Majesty has approved the petition of the jeweler Ivan Lazarev³ and other previous petitions from Armenians and has permitted the construction of an Armenian church in St. Petersburg. I have found a suitable location, where a small private stable is located. It is on Nevskii Prospect not far from the Kazan Church...⁴

¹PSZR, XVIII, no. 13384.

²PSZR, XIX, no. 13464.

³Ivan Lazarev (Hovhannēs Lazarean)[1735-1801] was a member of the famous Lazarev family who played a major role in Russo-Armenian relations during the 18th and 19th centuries, see biographical notes.

⁴The construction of the church began at the end of 1770 and was completed a year later. The church, called St. Catherine was built in the European style and

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Senate Decree
(25 August 1771)¹

The Governor of Astrakhan, Beketov, has informed us that following the order of 30 October 1769 he has instructed that a special and extraordinary wartime tax be levied on all merchants. The tax has been assessed at 80 kopeks per person per year...The governor has to report on the number of Armenian and Muslim merchants living there. When did they arrive and what kind of privileges were they given...On 17 September 1746 the Armenians of Astrakhan paid 739 rubles and the Tatars 150 rubles to the Astrakhan treasury to help the Russian merchants. Furthermore the Armenians are charged 600 rubles and the Tatars 300 rubles per year for the upkeep of the army barracks...Since the Armenians face the same conditions as their Russian counterparts, it is decided that all non-Russians who live in Kizliar and the Ukraine pay 70 kopeks per person a year. Half of that, or 35 kopeks, should go to the treasury and the other half to help the trade activities of Russian merchants. The Senate orders that the governor collect only 80 kopeks per person from the Armenians and Tatars per year and not to add any other levies at this time...

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*Kat'oghikos Simēon to Governor Krechetnikov*²
(17 December 1773)³

Archbishop Minas, by our order, has for some time now been in Russia to see to the religious needs of our people and to collect dues for the Holy See. The time for his return has arrived and we have written to him to come back to the Ararat See. We are sending our beloved Archbishop

served the Armenian community until the Bolshevik Revolution. The interior was converted to a swimming pool during the Soviet era. Following the fall of the USSR, the church was returned to the Armenian community of St. Petersburg and was restored as an Armenian church. Catherine's official decree granting the Armenians permission to construct churches in St. Petersburg and Moscow can be found in *PSZR*, XIX, no. 13525.

¹*Ibid.*, no. 13647.

²P. N. Krechetnikov became the governor of Astrakhan in 1773.

³*AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Persia (1774), file 468, ff. 12-13.

Iosif¹ in his place and ask Your Excellency to bestow your favor upon him, so that he may be able to carry out his duties to God and to our people... Your predecessor Nikita Afanas'evich Beketov held our people in high esteem and favored us with his love. May God reward him. I ask God to keep Your Excellency away from all sicknesses and bestow His Grace on your administration.²

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Count Panin to King Erekle II

(5 February 1774)³

Your Highness, My Honorable Friend! Trakhan Aghamalov, an Armenian merchant from India, is at present living in Your Highness's domain. He moved to Tiflis with the intention of relocating to Russia in the future. He is the nephew of Grigor Safrazov, a merchant living in Astrakhan, who is known to many of our nobles, as well as to Her Imperial Majesty. The two merchants have expressed their desire to be together and trade as one. It is in Your Highness's power to permit the departure of Tarkhan and his entire family from Tiflis...⁴

¹Archbishop Hovsēp' Argutinskii (Arghut'ean), was a major participant in swaying the Armenians toward a Russian orientation, see biographical notes.

²On 27 May 1774 Vasilii Iablonskii, the Russian consul in Enzeli reported that Argutinskii and an Armenian priest named Peter had arrived in Rasht from Armenia and wished to proceed to Astrakhan, *AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Persia (1774), file 466, f. 156.

³*AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Georgia (1774-1804), file 18, f. 5.

⁴On 23 April Tarkhan wrote another petition to be permitted to immigrate to Russia, *ibid.*, (1774), file 467, f. 7. On 5 July Captain Ivan L'vov, the Russian emissary to Georgia, wrote to Panin that Tarkhan was still awaiting Erekle's permission, *ibid.*, file 468, ff. 8-9. On the same date he also wrote to Safrazov, *TsGADA*, Coll. 1252, group 1, file 1682, f. 162. Tarkhan was still in Georgia a year later. The reason for Erekle's refusal becomes evident in a letter from Panin to Erekle on 20 July 1775. It seems that Tarkhan was considered a Persian subject and had left Persia under a cloud. Panin assured Erekle that Tarkhan was no longer a Persian subject and asked him to make inquiries from Karim Khan, *AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Georgia, file 468, ff. 18-22.

297

Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca(10/21 July 1774)¹

Article XXIII. The fortresses which are standing in a part of Georgia and of Mingrelia...conquered by the Russian armies, shall be considered by Russia as belonging to those on whom they were formerly dependent...Russian troops shall, at the time agreed upon, quit the said Provinces of Georgia and Mingrelia. On its part, the Sublime Porte engages, conformably to the contents of the present Article to grant a general amnesty to all those in the said countries who, in the course of the present war, shall have offended it in any manner whatsoever. It renounces solemnly and forever to exact tributes of children, male and female, and every other kind of tax. It engages to consider such of its people only as its subjects as shall have belonged to it from all antiquity; to leave and restore all the castles and fortified places which have been under the dominion of the Georgians and Mingrelians to their own exclusive custody and government; as also not to molest in any manner the religion, monasteries, and churches; not to hinder the repairing of dilapidated ones, nor the building of new ones; and it promises that these people shall not be oppressed on the part of the Governor...

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*Erekle II to General Medem*²(30 May 1775)³

Your Excellency's presence and that of your army in such near proximity has encouraged the Christians of this region to set their eyes and minds toward you. The Christian population, as far as Istanbul, awaits the arrival of the Russian army so that they can join it and escape slavery. My petitions to the previous commanders in the Caucasus⁴were left unfulfilled...

I ask that when you communicate to Her Majesty, you may possibly mention the fact that when Russian troops arrive in New Shemakhi, the

¹Hurewitz, I, 59.

²General I. F. Medem was the Commander of the Russian Army of the Caucasus.

³*Gramoty*, II (pt. 2), 266-267.

⁴Generals G. Tottleben and A. Sukhotin.

entire Daghestan can be conquered. Our Christian population is waiting to join you.

You can sail by boat from Saliyan to the Kura River. From there it is only 100 *versts* to Kakhet'i on a smooth road to Tiflis, where our people will await you at the banks of the Kura River. In addition, the Persians and others Muslims of Gilan are not united and some of them are willing to join your side. There is no need to explain the sympathies of the Christian population of that region. They will join you wholeheartedly and shall willingly enter the service of Her Imperial Majesty...

299

*Armenian Merchants of Astrakhan to Prince Potemkin*¹

(30 January 1776)²

Last year [1775] a storm capsized a boat from Enzeli, which contained merchandise worth more than 50,000 rubles. We looked for the merchandise along the coast but could not find any of it. In addition, another vessel, owned by the merchant Skvortsov, was also lost with all its men and goods. We have nothing left but our tears. We did not have a large enough capital to pay for all the merchandise and were thus forced to borrow large sums. We are bankrupt and are close to a million rubles in debt.

We have learned that Major Fedor Kridiner [Kridner'] has recently written to Sergei Ivanov, a friend of his in Astrakhan that some of the goods were washed ashore in Derbent. It was seized by Fath 'Alī Khan of Derbent, and was sold in the markets there. We learned that Fath 'Alī Khan had asked the major to become his partner, had sought his silence, and had given him presents of silk. The major, it seems, reported the situation to General Medem. The khan took some of the merchandise for sale in Kuba and left the rest with Major Kridner' in Derbent. Petros, an Armenian from Derbent, wrote to us that our goods were sold in various trading arcades in Derbent...Your servants Sergei Ivanov, Galust Hako-

¹General Prince Grigorii Aleksandrovich Potemkin (1739-1791). A favorite of Catherine II, he was, in 1776, appointed as governor-general of Novorossiisk, Azov, and Astrakhan.

²*TsGADA*, Coll. 15, file 192, ff. 86-87.

bov, Khosrov di Markar, Mkrtum Garuneants, Zakar Hakobjaneants, Eghiazar di Poghos, Matvei Isailov, Ivaz di Harutian.¹

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Artemii Lazarev to Shahamir Shahamirean

(7 November 1777)

On November 25th of last year, which is the 9th of Yamir,² I wrote you a letter and gave it to the Englishman Thompson, who took it to London, from where it would reach you by boat. I hope you have received it. If you have not, I am reiterating what was in that letter.

I received your letters on 4th June and 16 August of this year. My family and are happy that you and yours are well... You may not be aware of the rank that our Empress has bestowed upon me. My children and I have become noblemen in perpetuity. On 20 May 1774 my family and I were included in the Russian book of nobility. We can buy and sell villages, hold serfs and have all the rights of the Russian nobility... The news that my daughter Anna has married Major Hovhannēs Sumbatov is true...³ You wrote about the conditions in Artsakh (Karabagh), about Melik Hovsēp' and the others.⁴ You ask that we should ask the Russian to help them. The Ottomans are weak now and the Persians are weak too. Our meliks are brave and their enemies still fear them. They are the only people who have kept the honor of our nation. I read your concerns and understood your feelings; you are a real patriot. I hope that one day our people will wake up from their cowardice and laziness and gain freedom. But I feel that our nation, especially those in Karabagh, must be first educated. They must forget their pride, stubbornness, and superstitions. I hope they learn history, geography, and science and improve their mind. They should learn from your son Hakob and his teacher Movsēs Baghramean, the authors of the booklet called *Exhortation*.

Our religious leaders should also preach at all Armenian gatherings the notion of freedom and open the eyes of the people. They should not

¹In the winter of 1777 Major Kridner' was punished for accepting gifts from Fath 'Alī Khan, *Butkov*, III, 143.

²New Julfa Armenians had their own dating system.

³Known as Ivan Sumbatov, he was a member of the Armenian Squadron and had a rank of lieutenant in 1758, see document 262.

⁴Refers to the actions of Ebrāhīm Khan of Shushi against the meliks, see commentary.

go on with long prayers, for that will teach us nothing. Love, knowledge and unity will restore our homeland and free us from ignorance. Our people obey the clergy and watch their lips.

When the above is accomplished, then Meliks Adam, Hovsēp' and Esayi, should either together, or separately, rebel against their overlords and expel them. Once in power, the meliks have to act severely against the bad and be kind to the good Armenians. They have to rule with justice. I think that this can be done. Other nations have done it as I have read in history. Otherwise, it is no use asking for help. You must remember that when Peter the Great arrived, many got excited and rose to action. Nothing was accomplished, however. The yüzbaşıs were forced to stay in Astrakhan, died and were buried there. All their efforts were fruitless. The same happened when a Russian army of 6,000 went to Imeret'i during the last war with the Turks. After the war ended [1774], the Russians left and the situation remained as bad as before. It is true that Fath 'Alī Khan of Derbent has come under Russian protection and that Her Majesty has sent troops to expel his enemies. But you must remember that Derbent has a common border with Russia...

301

General Suvorov¹ to Prince Potemkin(17 July 1778)²

The Christians of the Crimea are prepared to move to Russia. I assure you that they can be ready to do so in a month's time. I recommend that we do so before the weather turns cold. There are 3,000 Greek merchants and 12,000 Greek peasants. There are 12,000 Armenian merchants (no Armenians are engaged in farming here). There are also 5,000 Armenian Catholics here. Altogether there are 20,000 Christian souls. How many

¹The famous Russian military commander and theorist, Alexander Vasil'evich Suvorov (1729 or 1730-1800). He defeated the Turks in a number of battles in 1773-1774. At the time of the writing of this report he was in charge of the reinforcements of the defenses of the Crimea.

²N. I. Dubrovin, ed., *Prisoedinenie Kryma k Rossii*, II (St. Petersburg, 1885), 558-560.

of them will remain behind is not known. Neither the khan of the Crimea nor the Christians are aware that we may relocate them [the Christians] to Russia. I suggest that you speak to Her Majesty about this. We can bribe the khan with presents and can give assurances to the Greek metropolitan. I suggest that we present the metropolitan with 3,000 or 5,000 rubles, and budget some 50,000 rubles for the transport of the Greeks. The Armenians leader is Vardapet Petros Markosov. Father Hakob, who receives a small pension from the Vatican, is the Catholic Armenian leader. Upon receiving aid from the governor of Azov, the farmers will be able to start a new life. The city folk, however, will need more help

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General Suvorov to General Rumiantsev-Zadunaiskii¹(26 July 1778)²

The Christians of the Crimea were under a great threat from the Tatars and are being relocated to Russia. Upon entering Russia they should be given provisions, fodder, and seeds. Local commanders, will issue receipts (so that Russian peasants could be compensated) and will collect these items from our peasants...A month's supply of provisions should be enough to bring them to the Aleksandrovskii Fort by the Dnieper River. After that the governor of Azov will take them care of them. I have asked the governor to supply 2,000 carts in batches of 50, 100, and 200 to transport these Christians and their belongings. General Prince Bagration will escort them until they reach the Aleksandrovskii Fort, after which they will be under the protection of the Governor of Azov...

When word of the migration leaked out, the Christians feared reprisals. The moment the Greek metropolitan, Ignatii, heard that there may be danger, he left Bakhchisarai³ and sought refuge with the Russian camp at Ak-khach. The khan's men who immediately searched for him visited his house. Both Armenian priests have also left town and have taken refuge in Kaffa.⁴ The Christians barely escaped. Some of them were already

¹Peter Aleksandrovich Rumiantsev-Zadunaiskii (1725-1796) achieved fame in the Russo-Turkish War of 1768-1774 with his cavalry attacks.

²*TsGVIA*, Coll. VUA, file 208, ff. 163-164.

³The main city of the Crimean Khanate, founded in the early 16th century.

⁴Present-day Feodosiia, a town on the Crimean coast. Kaffa was a Genoese trading post in the Black Sea, which had attracted Armenian merchants to settle there.

under the observation of the Tatar guards who had orders to execute them. An Armenian bishop, together with an Armenian vardapet, has arrived here from Jerusalem and are enjoying our hospitality as well...¹

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General Suvorov to General Rumiantsev-Zaduniaskii

(18 September 1778)²

The departure of the Crimean Christians in over! I have sent 31,098 persons to Azov Province. Two hundred and eighty eight (table below has only 285) souls decided to winter in Enikol and Cherkassk. The Greek Metropolitan and the Armenian priests left the Crimea with their people. The cost of bringing them here has so far reached 130,000 rubles.

From Kaffa:	males	females	total
Greeks	837	806	1,643
Georgians	13	11	24
Armenians	2,871	2,730	5,511
From Bakhchisarai			
Priests	2		2
Greeks	667	652	1,319
From Karas-Bazaar			
Georgians	18	17	35
Armenians	2,121	2,063	4,184 ³
Greeks	518	486	1,004
Wallachians	5	2	7

¹On 28 July Suvorov wrote to A. D. Konstantinov, that Her Majesty's decree clearly stated that the Christian immigrants should not be subjected to even the slightest animosity by any one. Any Tatar who dares to harm them should be publicly punished, *Dubrovin*, II, 598-599. On 28 August Suvorov wrote to Potemkin that the Armenians of the Crimea had selected four deputies who wished to travel to St. Petersburg and present a petition to Catherine the Great, *TsGADA*, Coll. 16, file 588, f. 362.

²*TsGVIA*, Coll. VUA, file 208, ff. 276-278.

³The Armenians from Karas-Bazaar possessed 9 Georgian (8 men and 1 woman) and 4 Wallachian (1 man and 3 women) slaves, who accompanied them.

From Kozlov			
Greeks	92	80	172
Priest	1		1
Armenians	667	637	1,304 ¹
From Akhtmecheti			
Armenians	145	114	259
From Old Crimea			
Greeks	60	49	109
Armenians	87	73	160
From Belbek			
Greeks	30	40	70
From Balaklava			
Greeks	43	39	82
Armenians from Tatly	112	100	212
Armenians from Malik	39	33	72
Armenians from Kamyshlak	62	59	121
Armenians from Sale	115	109	224
Armenians from Churuksu	20	20	40
Armenians from Burunduk-otar	17	21	38
Armenians from Topchak	7	3	10
Armenians from Sultan-saly	34	23	57
Armenians from Urtalak	214	192	406
People from other villages ²			
The following stayed behind ³ :			
Armenians	134	94	228
Greeks	30	27	57

¹The Armenians from Kozlov had 70 Georgian and 1 Wallachian slaves.

²There are no numbers indicated but if one takes out the totals from the table from the total number of people that arrived, there must have been over 14,000 men and women from the various villages.

³According to the report some were merchants, others wintered in the Crimea, and others stayed for personal reasons.

304

Conditions for Settling the Armenians from the Crimea
(September 1778)¹

1. Armenians can settle in the Azov or Astrakhan provinces, depending which climate suits them, in regions designated for them. They are to have all the forest rights, the rights to plant grain, to raise livestock. They are to have enough land required for their livelihood. Residents from nearby towns cannot settle among them unless the Armenians permit it.²
2. Armenians are to settle together in the designated lands. They are not permitted to settle individually in various areas, even if they or the commandant of the region wishes to do so.
3. Armenians are to take an eternal oath of allegiance to Her Majesty in their own language and in their own churches.
4. Armenians are permitted to manufacture and trade their goods inside and outside of Russia and shall be accorded the same rights and privileges given to Russian merchants and manufacturers.
5. Armenians are permitted to build their own churches, whenever and as many as is needed. They are to have their own clergy. The clergy have to be in union with the Supreme Armenian Patriarch residing in the Ararat Province [Ējmiatsin]. The community has the right to request new pastors if they wish to dismiss their clerics.³
6. Armenian villages are exempt from billeting, supplying food or transport for the army, as well as corvée.
7. No recruits are to be taken from Armenian settlements. There shall be no demands for various State duties from them.⁴

¹*TsGIA*, Coll. 880, group 1, file 19, ff. 85-86.

²On 18 April and 6 May 1779 the Armenians complained to Suvorov that the governor of Azov, Chertkov, had selected lands where there was no water or forests. They asked that they be permitted to settle by the Sea of Azov, where their merchants could use the waterways for trade. They also asked that their farmers be settled some five *versts* from them, *Dubrovin*, III, 152-153; *TsGADA*, Coll. 16, file 588, f. 396. On 20 April 1779, Suvorov was in Kozlov (Evpatoriia) from where he wrote to Turchaninov to ask Chertkov to act benevolently toward the Armenians, *POII*, Manuscript Collection, no. 342, f. 12.

³The document apparently permitted the community to bring Armenian clerics, who were not under the supervision of Ējmiatsin.

⁴The document does not state if this was a temporary condition.

8. Armenians are permitted to make wine, brandy, and vodka and sell it in their villages...They are not permitted to rent out or open taverns in these villages.¹
9. Armenians villages can have their own courts and observe their own customary laws in civil cases. Criminal cases are to be handled by the Russian fort under whose jurisdiction they fall.
10. Some of the Armenians have lost their belonging because of the wars with the Muslims. They are to be given financial aid from the State to build their homes and, in some cases, their workshops. They are to return the borrowed sum within ten years, three years of that shall be interest-free.²

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Empress Catherine's Charter to the Armenians from the Crimea
(14 November 1779)³

By the Grace of God, We Catherine II, Empress and Autocrat of All Russia, and etc. etc. etc.

We bestow Our Royal favor on Our loyal Archmandrite (Vardapet) Peter Markosov, and to all and each of the Christian Armenians from the Crimea.⁴

We have received your petition, dated 16 of July from Bakhchisarai, in which you request to be free from the yoke of the infidel and become subjects of the Russian Empire. We have granted your petition and have ordered that you be accorded the same rights and privileges as all our subjects. In addition:

1. We shall aid you in transferring all your movable belongings from the Crimea to the Azov Province.
2. You are to be settled near the Fort of St. Dmitrii of Rostov and are to be allocated 3,000 *desiatins* of land. You are permitted to fish in one-fourth of the Don River, as well as in the Temernik River. If you need more land for your settlements you may settle along the rivers

¹This was to keep their Russian neighbors out.

²On 11 March 1779 the Senate decreed that a special bank be created in As-trakhan so that Armenians who had suffered at the hands of the Kalmyks in 1771 could borrow loans. A sum of 50,000 rubles was allocated from Moscow for this purpose, *PSZR*, XX, no. 14853.

³*SAAN*, I, 177-181.

⁴The Catholic Armenians were not included in this charter.

where you have fishing rights. You are forever exempt from paying any dues for fishing.

3. All classes are exempt from all types of taxes and duties for a period of ten years. After that you shall pay taxes once a year. The merchants shall pay one percent of their capital in rubles. The artisans and those belonging to the lower middle class¹ shall pay two rubles per household. The peasants, each of whom will be granted 30 *desiatins* of land, shall pay 5 kopeks per *desiatin* per year. For one year, our treasury shall take care of those without any means of subsistence. They shall be given seeds, fodder, and animals for which they shall repay the treasury in a period of ten years. They are to construct houses using wood from the forests without any dues to the treasury. They are forever exempt from quartering or feeding troops or other irregular dues. They are also forever exempt from surrendering recruits for the army. They are permitted to construct barns, stores, storage depots, factories, and whatever else they wish to do using their own capital.
4. Peter Markosov shall retain his position as the religious head of the community for life. The Armenians are permitted to construct churches, bell towers and to follow their own rite as set by their supreme patriarch, who resides in the monastery near Ararat.
5. You are permitted to construct a city by the Poludenki boundary and call it Nakhichevan. We have allocated 12,000 *desiatins* for this purpose. You may have your own court and follow your customs. You may elect your own leaders and they shall be paid the same salary as other officials of the Azov Province. The Russian gendarmes will be there to protect you and not to interfere in your internal affairs. You are permitted to travel and to trade freely in Our empire. You are permitted to construct sea-going vessels with your own capital. You are free to construct factories and useful manufacturing workshops, as well as plant fruit orchards. You are permitted to make wine and sell it throughout Russia. You are permitted to make brandy and vodka for your own use, but you cannot take it outside your communities. In other words, you are free to prosper each to your own ability and in accordance with the laws of Our Land.

We grant this charter to all of you in perpetuity.

We have signed and affixed Our State Seal.

Catherine

¹The Russian term used is *meshchanstvo* (petty bourgeoisie).

306

Ivan Lazarev's Memorandum to General Suvorov(10 January 1780)¹

For the past several centuries, Armenia has had no state and has been under Turkish or Persian domination. Only a very small part of Armenia, such as Karabagh, has maintained its independence. The Armenians can easily revive their nation with the appearance of an Armenian leader. The Armenian population is not small and its geographical and climatic conditions can sustain the people. The land has iron, lead, and gunpowder.

The meliks of Karabagh, although independent, due to their disagreements have fallen under the power of Panāh Khan.² They also do not recognize any Armenian leader to rule over the people and hence are useless. Persian khans have ruled other Armenians regions, such as Shemakhi, Ganja, Erevan, Nakhichevan, Akulis, and other cities and areas, and many Armenians have abandoned these places. They have sought refuge in the Turkish provinces of Lesser Armenia, in Van, Erzerum, Kars, and other places. If Her Majesty or the Armenians found a leader who was able to get hold of Derbent and take over Shemakhi and Ganja, then the Armenians of Karabagh would join him without a thought. The combined Armenian army can then conquer Erevan and other cities.

Only two or three thousand Russian troops are required to bring this plan to fruition. Infantrymen and artillery is essential. The Russians would defend the Armenians until they could learn the arts of war and become capable of defending against Turkish and Persian attacks. The land easily can support a large army. Such an endeavor would not only bring glory to Russia but will weaken the Turkish and Persian states. An independent Armenia, encompassing the above regions will be able to sustain an army of fifteen to twenty thousand men. It can also gather 60,000 men in a war against the Turks or Persians. Such an Armenian State will also be obliged to send troops and other assistance to Russia to help it against any common enemy. Finally the commerce between Russia and Persia, which has never been used to its full potential, will bring millions to the Russian economy.

¹*AANR*, Coll. 99, group 2, file 13, ff. 59-64; also in *SAAN*, II, 68-70.

²Should be Ebrāhīm Khan, son of Panāh Khan.

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Prince Potemkin to General Suvorov

(11 January 1780)¹

You are to immediately go to Astrakhan... Upon arrival you are to assess the conditions of the region...

1. You are to take over the command of the local troops and the Caspian Flotilla. You are to assess how many men can subsist on the supplies of ammunitions, artillery, provisions, and fodder for any land and sea operations in that region.
2. Treat the khans loyal to us well; those we have defeated with humanity. The khans who are against Her Majesty should be severely punished, however...
3. You can increase the size of the Flotilla by using merchant ships. You can increase the number of troops by recalling those who are on leave or retired. You are to capture or sink enemy vessels...
4. Your main task is to assure the safety of our trade on the Caspian Sea. You are to find a suitable area between Rasht and Lengerud [Lenkoran?], purchase the land strip from the local ruler and build a strong fort. You are to house a garrison with artillery to discourage any incursions.

Do not waste any time in beginning this operation. I suggest that you go to Derbent and install a Russian garrison there for your safety. You are to inform Erekle and the khan of Shemakhi of Her Majesty's peaceful intentions in the region. I have approved whatever provisions, medical staff, and medicine, and other things you may need.²

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General Suvorov to Prince Potemkin

(15 February 1780)³

Meliks Ammat [Adam]⁴ and Yusuf [Hovsēp']⁵ left Karabagh three months ago and are in Astrakhan. They report the following:

¹*Suvorov*, II, 222-223. The words "top secret" appear on this order.

²The death of Karīm Khan encouraged Potemkin to take advantage of the instability in Persia and follow Peter the Great's campaign.

³*TsGVIA*, Coll. 52, group 1/194, file 218, ff. 5-6.

⁴Melik Adam, also known as Atam or Hatam, was the melik of Jraberd.

⁵Melik Hovsēp', also known as Usup' or Usub, was the melik of Gulistan.

Adam and Hovsēp' are the most senior meliks of Karabagh. Adam has son called Medzhlium Bek [Mejlum], while Hovsēp' has two sons, Beglar Agha and Abov Agha.

Melik Shahnazar¹ and his son Dzhunshut [Jamshid] Bek are friends of Ebrāhīm Khan of Shushi and are against the other meliks.

Melik Esayi,² is an old man who has a decree granted to him by Peter the Great. The actions of Melik Shahnazar and Ebrāhīm Khan, however, have reduced him to poverty. His district has been taken from him and has been given to his nephew Melik Bamat.

Melik Mirza Khan³ maintains a balance between Ebrāhīm Khan and the other Armenian meliks.

The khan of Erevan has refused to pay his tribute to Erekle and the later, together with 12,000 troops, has gone to Erevan. He has occupied the suburbs of Erevan with its 15,000 households of various nationalities. He has relocated some of them to Tiflis.⁴ Prince Bak'ar, the son of King Alexander of Imeret'i has returned home from Shiraz. The kat'olikos of Georgia wrote to Bak'ar to rush to Tiflis, assuring him of Erekle's absence. Erekle, accompanied by the Armenian kat'oghikos, Simēon, who was near Bayazid, which belongs to the Turks and which is some 150 *versts* from Erevan, was informed of Bak'ar's move. He divided his army into two groups. One group, under his command, returned immediately to Tiflis, the other under the command of his son Levan,⁵ stayed behind. The reason for the Armenian kat'oghikos's presence in the camp was due to the fact that he feared the reprisal of the khan of Erevan for his support of Erekle. It is reported that the khan of Erevan had gone to Ējmiatsin—some 30 *versts* from Erevan—and had beheaded six priests.

¹Melik of Varanda.

²Melik Esayi Bek of Dizak.

³Melik of Khachen.

⁴Most of them were Armenian craftsmen, which reduced the Armenian population of Erevan while increasing it in Tiflis. Two such expeditions, 1779 and 1780 were conducted by Erekle to bring both Erevan and Ganja more fully under Georgian control. Both regions were pillaged badly, Butkov, *Materialy*, II, 73-75 and Artemi Bogdanov, *Memoires of the Life of Artemi, of Waghar-schapat, near Mount Ararat in Armenia* (London, 1822), pp. 36-40.

⁵Levan was a brave warrior and a great help to his father. Unfortunately he was assassinated in 1781.

The holy relics of that monastery were safely hidden, however. It is also true that Erekle threw the Georgian kat'olikos, Antoni, down a tower.¹

309

General Suvorov to Prince Potemkin

(27 February 1780)²

Bogdan Khastatov, an Armenian supervisor of customs at Astrakhan, has requested to join our army and be given a military rank...He is an Asiatic [Armenian], is familiar with their customs, and can speak their languages. I need such a person in my army and am forwarding his petition to Your Excellency. I request that Your Excellency grant his request so that he may join the men under my command.

310

*Prince Potemkin to Governor Chertkov*³

(10 March 1780)⁴

Her Majesty's decree stated that Vardapet Peter Markosov was to be the religious head of the Armenians from the Crimea until his death. Vardapet Markosov has died and the representatives of the Armenians have petitioned me to appoint Archbishop Hovsēp' as their spiritual head. He has been given the authority from the Armenian kat'oghikos to act as the prelate of all the Armenians in Russia and we order that he be the spiritual leader of the Armenians in the Azov region as well.

311

Archbishop Argutinskii to Prince Potemkin

(March-April 1780)⁵

It is my duty as pastor of the Armenian community in Russia to defend it from harm...I request that Her Majesty's government react to the activi-

¹There is no evidence in any other source that Kat'olikos Anton Ieses-dze Batonishvili (1744-1755, 1764-1788) was killed by Erekle.

²*Vorontsov*, XXIV, 301.

³Vasilii Alekseevich Chertkov was the commandant of Azov.

⁴*MAAC*, Archives of the Kat'oghikosate, file 3, doc. 7, ff. 11-12. Also see *SAAN*, III, 320-322.

⁵*MAAC*, Archives of the Kat'oghikosate, file 3, doc. 7, ff. 12-15.

ties of Catholic missionaries and priests in Armenian populated regions. They learn our language, our customs, and our church rites and convert some of our naïve people to their faith. The Greeks are also subject to their activities. They break the rules of Christianity and secretly rebaptize these converts. Many of our people have already been fooled by them and have converted. Such activities have destroyed families and have harmed our community. I request the following:

1. Catholic priests are to be forbidden from spreading, openly or secretly, their religion among Armenians.
2. Since Catholic priests learn our language and copy our rites, they are to be forbidden from conducting Mass in Armenian. They are to conduct Mass in their own European languages and follow their own procedures and dress codes.
3. Many Armenians who were fooled by the Catholic priests have asked me to rejoin our Church. I ask that you permit all of them to renew their faith.
4. Some rich Armenians, who live in the domains of mountain princes, have purchased slaves of various nationalities. Among them are Muslim slaves who have been baptized and who wish to remain steadfast Christians... I ask that such slaves be permitted to remain Christian and serve their masters for seven years, after which they are to be free from bondage...¹

312

Prince Potemkin to Governor Chertkov(11 May 1780)²

The Armenian Archbishop Hovsēp' has requested that: 1.No Armenian priest be permitted to travel to Russia without the written permission of Ėjmiatsin, as stated in the order dated 30 June 1768. 2.As the Armenian

¹On 17 April Potemkin wrote to I. V. Iakoby, the Governor of Astrakhan, stating that Catholic priests were not permitted to convert Armenians and those Catholic Armenians who wished to return to their Church should be allowed to do so, *MAAC*, Archives of the Kat'oghikosate, file 5, doc. 26a, f. 3, *SAAN*, III, 322-323. On 26 January 1781, the governor of Azov, Chertkov, wrote to Argutinskii that the Catholic missionary, Father Jacob, had been ordered to cease converting Armenians, *SAAN*, III, 327.

²*MAAC*, Archives of the Kat'oghikosate, file 3, doc. 7; f. 18, file 5, doc. 23, f. 1.

population increases in your region that they be given more land closer to [New] Nakhichevan. 3. The cross that was presented to the late Vardapet Markosov, be given to the Armenian church in Nakhichevan as a sign of Her Majesty's regard toward the Armenian community.¹

313

Kat'oghikos Simēon to General Suvorov

(July 21, 1780)²

From the Slave of Christ, Simēon, Patriarch of the Apostolic Church of Christ at the Holy See of Ējmiatsin, the location of the holy relics of St. Gregory, St. Hrispsimē, and St. Gayanē... We wish God's grace and protection for the brave and honorable General Alexander Vasil'evich Suvorov and his kin... Amen.

I wish to thank you for your benevolence toward the Armenians from the Crimea. Our son, Hovsēp' [Argutinskii], has mentioned, in his letters, your kindness to our people. Our people have been freed from bondage and are under the protection of their Mother, Her Imperial Majesty, the Empress... We pray for Her Majesty's health, long life... Our religious hierarchy prays daily for Her Majesty's government officials and the strength of Her State... We pray that Her Majesty shall continue to protect our people in all regions, for the continuation of Her benevolence toward us, and for the indefinite rule of Her heirs...

314

General Suvorov to Peter Ivanovich Turchaninov

(12 September 1780)³

I request that you grant the petition of Peter Ivanov, an Armenian from Derbent. He was a great help in obtaining provisions and fodder for our troops during their stay in Derbent. He earned the wrath of Fath 'Alī Khan and was forced to leave Derbent and become a Russian subject. He has not been able to find a place to live and I request that you take him

¹A similar order was sent to the Governor Iakoby of Astrakhan on the same day, *MAAC*, file 5, f. 1, *SAAN*, III, 323-324. On 26 January 1781, Argutinskii was informed by Chertkov that new Armenian immigrants shall be settled around New Nakhichevan, *SAAN*, III, 328.

²*TsGVIA*, Coll. 52, group 1.194, file 234, ff. 20-24.

³*POII*, Coll. 342, f. 29.

under your protection and aid him to settle in Russia. I remain your servant...

315

Ivan Tumanovskii¹ to the Collegium of Foreign Affairs

(25 September 1780)²

The word is out in Persia that the Russian army is preparing to enter that country... Except for a number of local khans, everyone else in the Gilan and Derbent provinces is happy with the news... Armenians are especially joyful and are waiting impatiently for the arrival of Russian troops.³ The moment our army appears in these regions they shall conquer it. The reason for this is that the population has suffered tremendously under the rule of the local officials. They view the arrival of Russian forces as freedom from the yoke of various irregular taxes, which have reached some 30 rubles a year from every poor person and can go as high as 50, 100 or more from those who are better off. The khans know that the people have no choice. Those who refuse are subjected to bastinado⁴ until give up their possessions. The Persian khans are not united. Each one wants to rule the country and get rich. They do not have regular troops and use their subjects without paying them for their services...

316

Catherine II to the Russian Ambassador at Constantinople⁵

(11 January 1781)⁶

In 1768 the Armenian kat'oghikos, Simēon, residing by the mountains of Ararat, sent a message to Our Court seeking the protection of Russia for

¹Ivan V. Tumanovskii was the Russian consul in Enzeli.

²*AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Persia (1777-1785), file 482, ff. 117-118.

³The Muslim khans began to seize Armenian merchants traveling from Russia to Persia. They confiscated their goods and examined their letters. At times they even arrested the Armenians accusing them of acting as spies, for example see the case of Nikita Iakovlev, who was detained by Moḥammad Khan, the brother-in-law of Faḥ 'Alī Khan of Derbent as well as that of Ghukas Petrov from Ganja, *TsGVIA*, Coll. 52, group 1/194, file 218, ff. 53-57, 74-76.

⁴The Persian term is *falak*, which was a beating with a rod at the bare soles of one's feet.

⁵The Russian ambassador was Andrei S. Stakhiev.

⁶SAAN, III, 423-327.

his people and his Church. Following the example of Our Illustrious Ancestors, Peter the First and Elizabeth, We ordered the Collegium of Foreign Affairs to grant him a decree declaring Our kindness toward the Armenian people...

We also decreed that the said kat'oghikos shall be the sole spokesman for the Armenian Church... We issued an order to that effect on 14 November 1779 to the Armenians from the Crimea, who have settled in the Azov Province...

Archbishop Hovsēp', the kat'oghikos's appointee over the Armenians of Russia, has also asked that we do not receive, or issue a travel permit to any Armenian priest without the approval of the kat'oghikos. Archbishop Hovsēp' has asked Us to ask you, as Our representative at the Ottoman Porte, to assist the Armenian religious leaders at the Turkish capital to carry out the kat'oghikos's requests...

We also instruct you to assist in every possible way Our Armenian subjects, be they merchants or clergy, when traveling in the Ottoman empire, even though there is a rivalry between them and our co-religionists, the Greeks.

317

General Suvorov to Prince Potemkin

(23 February 1781)¹

Hedāyat Khan of Rasht has formed an alliance with the khans of Derbent, Shemakhi, and Baku against Ebrāhīm Khan of Shushi. He has also dispatched a subordinate to pay the Lesghians to attack Karabagh. He is at present in Ardebil, with 4,000 troops, on his way to Karabagh. Ebrāhīm Khan of Shushi invited Melik Esayi of Dizak to Shushi, demanded a large sum from him, and then tortured and killed him. A month later he did the same to Melik Bakhtam,² the successor of Melik Esayi. His tyranny has spread fear among the meliks. Melik Adam of Jraberd and Melik Hovsēp' of Ikirmidort [Gulistan] have left their domains and have sought refuge with King Erekle.

¹*TsGVIA*, Coll. 52, group 1/194, file 234, ff. 11-12, 36.

²Also known as Wakhtam.

318

Andrei Stakhiev to Catherine the Great(15 May 1781)¹

The number of secular and clerical Armenians who have embraced the Catholic faith has increased both in Constantinople and other cities. In fact they have taken over the Armenian Church in Angora. The Armenian Patriarch of Constantinople² has petitioned the Porte to restore the church to his authority. The Porte dispatched a kapuji bashi³ to Angora to return the church to the Armenians and to bring some of the disobedient clerics to the Patriarch's residence in Constantinople.

On his way to Angora the *kapıcı başı* met with a courier, who carried messages from a number of European envoys and merchants in Scutari. He stopped the courier, took his messages, and dispatched them to the Armenian Patriarch. Since such an action affected all messages sent by foreign representatives, they sent a strong protest to the Porte on May 10th. I had to send one as well. The French minister had an audience with the chief vizier and stated that Kechai Bey and the Reis Efendi (Minister of Foreign Affairs) were in the pay of the Armenian Patriarch... The ambassador of the Viennese Court also complained about the actions of the Patriarch and demanded that he be replaced...⁴

319

The Meliks of Karabagh to General Suvorov(2 September 1781)⁵

We, the remaining Armenian meliks of Karabagh have been waiting Your Excellency's arrival with great joy. Your Excellency has not arrived and the Muslim inhabitants are persecuting us. We have put our destiny in God's hands and in the benevolence of Russia... We ask His Excellency Prince Potemkin and Your Excellency to send 10,000 Rus-

¹AVPR, Russia's Relations with Turkey (1781), file 574, ff. 7-8. The letter arrived in St. Petersburg on 23 June.

²Patriarch Zak'aria II (1773-1781, 1782-1799).

³The *kapıcı başı* was one the chief gate-keepers.

⁴Two weeks after this letter, Zak'aria was relieved from his post and was replaced by Patriarch Hovhannēs. Ten months later he was reinstated (1782-1799), while Hovhannēs was appointed as the Prelate of Amasia.

⁵TsGVIA, Coll. 52, group 1/194, file 266, f. 6.

sian troops to Karabagh to aid us against the infidel. Your benevolence toward us will be remembered forever and Your Excellency will be a Moses who rescued the Israelites from the Pharaoh. Your name will be mentioned in all our church services...Melik Adam, son of Melik Israyēl, Bek, Melik Beglar, son of Melik Hovsēp'.

320

The Meliks of Karabagh to Catherine the Great

(2 September 1781)¹

We the meliks and military leaders of Karabagh tearfully beg that Your Majesty help our people with Your motherly benevolence and with Your mighty forces rescue us Christians from our enemies. The Armenian nation is under the yoke of the unbelievers. Christ is our Savior. The Holy Scriptures informs us that those who believe in Him shall have eternal life. We are, however, at present suffering for the sake of our belief. You are our only hope. Your Majesty can save us from spiritual death.

Our domains have gold, silver, and lead—although, due to the presence of the enemy, we have not revealed these mines. We make use of our iron and copper mines, however. We also have alum, gunpowder, silk, cotton, various herbs, wheat and other grains, fruit orchards, timber, and plenty of fish in our rivers. We have many stone churches, which contain holy relics and which are in danger of being turned into mosques. Your Majesty is our only hope against our sufferings...Meliks of the *seghnaghs* in Karabagh; Adam Bek, Beglar Bek, Sargis K'evkha,² Grigor Hovakan, Arzman K'evkha, Baba K'evkha, Daniēl K'evkha, and Mkhith'ar K'evkha.

321

Kat'oghikos Ghukas of Garin³ to Prince Potemkin

(30 January 1782)⁴

From the Slave of Christ, Ghukas, Kat'oghikos and Patriarch of All Armenians, etc. to Prince Grigorii Aleksandrovich, the loyal advisor of Her Imperial Majesty, Catherine II, a friend of the Armenians...Amen

¹*Ibid.*, file 270, ff. 5-6.

²Also *kevkh*a or *kevkh*i, elder or head of a village.

³Kat'oghikos at Ējmiatsin (1780-1799).

⁴*TsGVIA*, Coll. 52, group 1/194, file 270, f. 3.

I am sure that Archbishop Hovsēp', the Prelate of the Armenians in Russia, has informed Your Excellency of my election as the successor of Kat'oghikos Simēon... We are extremely grateful for the kindness you demonstrated on behalf of the Armenians from the Crimea... We constantly pray for Her Majesty's health and the health of Her heir, the Grand Prince Paul Petrovich...¹ I entrust our archbishop, Hovsēp', and our people in Russia to Your Excellency's benevolence.

322

Lieutenant Sergei Melikov to Prince Potemkin(February 1782)²

The meliks of Karabagh have written to you requesting that Your Excellency extend them your kindness and your protection. They have made preparations for receiving Russian troops and are ready to feed and supply them in Karabagh. They also request that the Russian troops be under the command of General Suvorov, who is familiar with the conditions of the region, as well as the rights of the meliks of Karabagh.

I take the liberty to inform Your Excellency that in addition to the Russian troops, I can gather 2,000 Armenian volunteers to join in this expedition.³

323

*Hovsēp' Argutinskii to Ambassador Bulgakov*⁴(3 March 1782)⁵

Her Imperial Majesty presented the late Kat'oghikos Simēon with a decree in 1768. She also gave special instructions regarding the Armenians in Turkey to His Excellency Stakhiev, your predecessor, on 11 January 1781. I am writing to recommend Archbishop Minas, the envoy of Kat'oghikos Ghukas to Constantinople, to Your Excellency and request that you extend your benevolence toward him.

¹Tsar Paul (1796-1801).

²*TsGVIA*, Coll. 52, group 1/194, file 408/II, f. 20.

³On 19 February Suvorov wrote to Potemkin stating that Melikov had arrived with letters from the meliks of Karabagh, *TsGADA*, Coll. 10, group 1, file 252, f. 2.

⁴Iakov I. Bulgakov was the new Russian Ambassador to Constantinople.

⁵*AVPR*, Constantinople Mission Coll. (1782-1786), file 912, f. 2.

324

Passport

(24 September 1782)¹

By the decree of Her Imperial Majesty, Catherine Alekseevna, Sovereign and Autocrat of All Russia, etc. etc.

Let it be known that Mr. Doctor Rengens² is traveling from Russia to Persia, Daghestan, and Georgia on official business. He should be assisted in every way and should not be refused passage...Seal of the Imperial Russian State, signed by the Commander of Astrakhan, Michael Zhukov.

325

General Paul Potemkin³ to Gabriel Karakhanov

(23 November 1782)⁴

Upon arrival in Karabagh you shall inform Meliks Israyēl, Beglar, and Hovsēp' that I have received their letters. Tell them to keep me informed of all the conditions in Karabagh. Tell the Armenian patriarch⁵ that we seek his blessing and at that he should write to us at an opportune moment.

Try to ascertain the situation in Persia. The nature of the arguments and battles between the various khans; who is stronger and who is weaker; who is at war and who is at peace.

Find out the feelings of the population. Precisely how do the Armenians in Karabagh and Karadagh feel about the Russians? What is the feeling of the Persian population? Find about the regions on the Caspian

¹AANG, MS. Hd-13896.

²Doctor Jacob Reineggs was a German adventurer who had gained a reputation as a medical man and a geologist. He was an ambitious man with political acumen and hoped to obtain a major post in the future Russian administration of the Caucasus. General Potemkin nominated him as the Russian representative in Tiflis, where he gained Erekle's confidence and sent numerous reports to Potemkin encouraging the Russian conquest of the region.

³Paul S. Potemkin, the nephew of Prince Potemkin, was sent by Catherine to the Caucasus to advance the Russian cause.

⁴TsGADA, Coll. 23, group 1, file 13/I, ff. 151-152.

⁵Kat'oghikos at Gandzasar, Hovhannēs X Hasan-Jalalean (1763-1786). He was killed by Ebrāhim Khan, see doc. 388 and biographical notes.

Sea visited by the Russian navy last summer. Are there enough provisions and facilities to maintain and feed 50,000 troops?

326

General Potemkin to Archbishop Argutinskii

(21 December 1782)¹

1. The land of Greater and Lesser Armenia² has fallen into the hands of the infidel barbarians, the Turks and the Persians and has been under their rule for a long time. Have the Armenians managed to keep their souls or have they lost their spirit? Do they have enough strength of character, presence of mind, and faith left for overthrowing the yoke of foreign domination?
2. Armenians, for the most part, are involved in trade and industry and have prospered. Will they be willing to exchange their current status for a better life in the future? There is a general feeling that these merchants do not care about anything save greed and profit making.
3. Is there any difference between the Armenian merchants and those engaged in crafts? How many Armenians are involved in industry? What steps should be taken to find out their opinion?
4. Does faith have a strong role among the Armenians? Can it be a source of awakening the nation? Do the princes and meliks gradually accept an heir or do they directly appoint a successor? Do the people accept the outcome? How would the people react to the unification of the meliks with the Armenian Church?
You have to forgive my curiosity but it derives from my friendship with you...I need all the information of the physical layout of the land, especially the mountains of the Caucasus...
5. Your Excellency will recall the difficulties Hannibal had, when the army of Carthage had to cross the Alps into Italy. The Caucasus Mountains are more difficult to cross and although the Russian army is as good as Hannibal's forces, the knowledge of the terrain will be very helpful to overcome any difficulties. Whatever information you can supply about the mountains in Armenia, therefore, will be extremely valuable. Will you please tell me how strong is King

¹*TsGADA*, Coll. 23, group 1, file 13/I, ff. 162-164. A second copy, with minor differences, is in *AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1797-1799), file 464, ff. 152-154.

²Lesser Armenia is mentioned in the second copy only.

Erekle's union with the Armenians? What kind of power does he have over the Muslim khans in his domains? Does all of Karabagh pay taxes to Erekle? How large is Erekle's army?

6. Whom does the Armenian territory adjacent to Georgia belong? How many meliks are there in Karabagh and how many people live there?
7. What towns, rivers, lakes, mountains, and forests lie in our path if our army goes through Tiflis and what is the topography if we decide to go through Derbent?
8. How much can we rely on the princes and the population of these places if we decide to go there?
9. Are there any fortifications between Tiflis and Erevan, or between Derbent, Shemakhi, to Ararat and Nakhichevan? What are the distances between the settlements and what can we expect to encounter?
10. Where does the khan of Shushi have his fortress? What other forts are near there? How can we approach his fort? I want you to give me all the details about the fort of Shushi, which the khan considers impregnable. What is the route to it and through what lakes, forests, marshes, and mountains does one have to pass?
11. Can you supply the name of all the various khans we may encounter; their temper, intelligence, ancestry, weaknesses and strengths?
12. What kind of natural resources and industry do they possess? Is the population rich or poor?
13. Can we obtain any wheat, fodder and other necessary items for the army? Which regions have more provisions and which have less? For it is a fact that a well-fed army is a satisfied army. Woe to the commander who does not think about his troops' provisions.
14. I need to ascertain if there is enough food, the quality of the land, and the suitability of the terrain for transporting provisions, in all the places that I have outlined? Are the rivers, for example, the Kura, navigable? Is it deep enough near Tiflis to use boats to carry provisions? What places does it pass through and what kind of people inhabit the regions between it and the Aras (Arax)? Are there any other major rivers between the two?...

327

Archbishop Argutinskii's Response to General Potemkin(28 December 1782)¹

1. The territory of Greater and Lesser Armenia has, for a long time, been under the yoke of Persian and Turkish barbarians and continues to be so at present. The Armenians, however, steadfastly maintain their Christian faith. Although most wish to free themselves, the terror of Muslim rule has weakened their resolve. A new campaign would revive the fighting spirit of their ancestors and they would throw off foreign rule.
2. Except for a small group of fighters, Armenians are generally engaged in trade and handicrafts. The rule of the barbarians has forced them into this. The warrior spirit remains and once a successful uprising becomes apparent, they shall give up their trading and will take up arms. At present, many of them are voluntarily serving the Persian khans. Do you think that given the opportunity they would not prefer to serve Her Royal Highness?
3. I have no information as to the number of Armenians engaged in trade and crafts and cannot obtain that information. God willing, when you embark on your mission [conquest], you shall be in a position to gather that information.
4. Faith in Christ is the strongest feeling among us Armenians and we have not lost it despite years of subjugation. All the efforts of the Persians and Turks, even the threat of death, has not weakened our faith in Christ. We also respect and obey our kat'oghikos as our spiritual father. The meliks of Karabagh are the main secular leaders and have resisted all pressures and invasions. Their subjects are wholly devoted to them and use the name and the clan of their melik when taking an oath. The Armenians hold their clergy in high regard. The meliks and their subjects are prepared to swear allegiance to the Russian monarch. Once you assure them of your protection they shall all become your subjects. The main objective, therefore, is to convince the meliks of this. Their subjects do not need any assurances, for they shall follow their meliks.
5. I shall not dwell on Hannibal's campaign through the Alps. A brave and able commander could achieve the same fame and results. King Erekle has soldiers, merchants, craftsmen, and peasants. He is the

¹*AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1797-1799), file 464, ff. 155-159.

strongest among the khans and the Persians view him as only second to the Shah. He controls Georgia, Ganja, Erevan, and Nakhichevan, while the khans of Tabriz and the surrounding regions send him annual gifts. After the death of Nāder Shah he has managed to capture and defeat many khans who sought to dominate the region. Erekle is very powerful and can recruit soldiers from the Caucasus Mountains as well. The khan of Shushi is safe from attack by other khans, save Erekle. King Erekle can muster a force of 10,000 men composed of Georgians, Armenians, and Tatars.

6. Armenia borders Georgia in the west by the Kars and Akhaltsikhe provinces. The Turks rule over those provinces. The southern borders of Armenia reach Mt. Ararat and include the city of Erevan, the capital of that province. A Persian khan, submissive to Erekle, rules there. The Turks rule the region from Mt. Ararat to Bayazid. In the east is Ganja, which is ruled by a Persian khan who is under Erekle's protection. From Ganja to the fort of Shushi is the domain of the five Armenian meliks who are under the protection of the khan of Shushi.
7. Except for the mountains, there are no difficult inroads between the Caucasus and Tiflis. There is an easy passage, via the territory of the Shamkhal, from the Caucasus to Derbent. The local population, however, can be a problem. There are two roads from Derbent to Tiflis. The first through Shemakhi is shorter, but mountainous. The second, via Baku, is longer but easier to traverse. Once you reach the Kura River there is a straight road to Tiflis. Since you plan to send troops to Karabagh via Tiflis and Derbent, would it not be simpler to just send the troops from Derbent and avoid going through Tiflis?
8. The key to the campaign is to first conquer the fort of Derbent and get hold of its khan. Otherwise, any move into the interior of Persia will prove dangerous. The mountain tribes would take up arms against the Russians and Derbent would serve as a base to defeat them. After taking Derbent you must not rely on the khan's loyalty. You should install a Russian commander and keep the children of the khan as hostages¹ in Russia. The local Armenians will join the Russian forces.
9. The road from Tiflis to Erevan and Nakhichevan, despite a few mountains, is not difficult to traverse. There are no roads from Shemakhi to Ararat and Nakhichevan. The only way is from Shemakhi to Ganja, through Georgia. There are no further obstacles

¹Text has *amanat*.

from the terrain or the population after that. The distance from Ararat to Tiflis is 250 *versts*, from Shemakhi to Ararat is also 250 *versts*, while the distance from Derbent to Shemakhi is 100 *versts*.

10. The city of Shushi is on top of a hill and has natural defenses. The distance from the bottom to the top is some 6 *versts* and the path is covered with dense woods and twisted defiles. It is very difficult to ascend. The fort itself lies on top of a rocky precipice near a river and the entire fortification is close to one *verst* in circumference. There are mountains and hills on all sides within two *versts* of the fort and all passes are full of twisted woods and defiles. The khan, relying on the natural defenses of the fort, does not fear anyone. He does not realize that a year's blockade by a small army would force him to surrender. The Persians do not have the patience for such a siege. There are no lakes or swamps near Shushi. Armed Armenians live throughout the region surrounding Shushi. The khan of Shushi controls Sisian, Ghap'an, and Karabagh.
11. The khans of Azerbaijan¹ are all the same. They are disloyal and cannot be trusted. They use the sugarcoated words of all Asiatics and make false statements. Although occasionally one finds a good man among them, their relations with their neighbors consist of lying and betrayal. One has to constantly be on guard when dealing with them.
12. The entire region is rich with grain and other foodstuffs. It has livestock, fish, silk, cotton, iron, copper, and alum. The population is mostly peasants and nomads. There are soldiers, merchants and craftsmen among them. The population in general is well off.
13. As stated in the previous point there should be no problem finding provisions and fodder for the army. The people will gladly sell it. There are no rivers, save the Kura, which are navigable. The Kura passes through Ganja and empties into the Caspian Sea. Both banks of the river are populated by Tatars; those in the north are subjects to the khan of Shemakhi and those in the south to the khan of Shushi.
14. One cannot sail from Tiflis to Ganja on the Kura. The rapids and the shallows forbid it. From Ganja to Saliyan² where the Kura joins the Aras and flows to the Caspian, is smooth sailing. The Arax River, because of its shallows and rapids is not navigable.

¹That is the khans in Persian Azerbaijan, south of the Arax River. There was no other Azerbaijan at that time.

²Should be Javad and not Saliyan.

In order to campaign in the region, you need King Erekle. I suggest that you honor him above King Solomon [of Imeret'i]. I also suggest that you present his son Yulon with the order of St. Anne, the same order with which his late brother Levan was decorated. Then you shall have no problems with the khans of Azerbaijan, for they all respect and fear Erekle. You should also assure all the Christians and Muslims of Her Majesty's benevolence towards the population...

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Kat'oghikos Ghukas to Prince Potemkin

(17 January 1783)¹

Our dear Dr. Jacob Reineggs delivered the letter of Your Excellency, dated 20 August 1782, to us. We rejoice that Your Excellency honors me and my people with your favor and thank you for the kindness you have demonstrated toward our son, Archbishop Hovsēp'. We have received the expensive cross you have sent to us and are grateful of Her Majesty's benevolence toward us. We pray for Her health, the health of Her son and Her grandsons...²

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Kat'oghikos Hovhannēs to Catherine the Great

(22 January 1783)³

The Slave of Christ, Hovhannēs, the Armenian kat'oghikos of the land of Albania [Aghuank'] located at the Holy See in Gandzasar and the five districts⁴ bows before Her Majesty, the Empress, whose benevolence promises to deliver us from the infidel...

I, Melik Adam, and the districts of the five meliks of the *khamse*, together with our bishops and people constitute some 30,000 households are your slaves and devoted subjects... We hope that like Your illustrious ancestors, Peter the Great and Empress Catherine I, who granted special decrees to our predecessors, Esayi and Nersēs, and our yūzbaşıs, Your Majesty will also bestow Your favor upon us. Our entire popula-

¹Russian translation in *TsGVIA*, Coll. 52, group 1/194, file 270, f. 91; Armenian text in *Diwan*, IV, 290-292.

²Alexander I (1801-1825), Constantine, and Nicholas I (1825-1855).

³*TsGVIA*, Coll. 52, group 1/194, file 270, ff. 89-90.

⁴The five Armenian districts in Karabagh, known as *kamse*.

tion—our bishops, clergy, meliks, landowners, yüzbaşıs and all the armed and unarmed men, as well as myself—are ready to forever submit to Your Motherly protection...

330

*General Potemkin to Commandant of Kuroedov*¹(22 January 1783)²

I am sending the Armenian Rustam Sergeev, son of Chapalov, to our resident Tumanovskii in Rasht. Sergeev is to gather secret information and return as soon as possible. I instruct you to issue the necessary passport, together with a Tatar [Persian] translation, so that he may cross the border at the Andreevskii village. You are to give him money from me and are to report immediately when he returns.

331

Prince Potemkin to Catherine the Great(9 February 1783)³

The following are extracts from Dr. Reineggs' letters:

On 26 December of 1782 Dr. Reineggs left Tiflis for the Three Churches [Ējmiatsin]. He arrived on Palm Sunday...The kat'oghikos surrounded by 32 bishops conducted Mass. After that Reineggs entered the church with five bishops, one of whom carried my letter and gift on a golden plate...The kat'oghikos put the cross I had sent around his neck and read my letter aloud expressing his joy and that of his people for Your Majesty's benevolence...That evening they all prayed for Your Majesty's health and asked for some Russian troops, not to attack anyone but to bolster the confidence and bravery of the Armenians.

All the meliks are prepared to let our troops into their strongholds. They are also ready to feed and maintain our army. Melik Adam, their elected leader, began preparing a letter, while the kat'oghikos went to Khor-Virap to pray at the tomb of St. Gregory.

Dr. Reineggs then went to Erevan to see Hōsein 'Alī Khan⁴ and to discuss our mutual trade agreements. The khan dispatched his son and a

¹The commandant of Kizliar.

²*TsGADA*, Coll. 23, group 1, file 13/V, f. 9.

³*TsGVIA*, Coll. 52, group 2, file 90, ff. 3-7.

⁴Khan of Erevan from 1762 to 1783.

number of grandees to welcome him. The glory of Russia was evident when Dr. Reineggs entered the fortress of Erevan amidst cannonade and music. Two officials led his horse to a residence provided for him. The next day he visited the khan who acted as a very concerned and humble host. Reineggs was permitted to make notes and to draw a plan of the fortifications and the various supply depots. If Reineggs had sixty mountain fighters he could have conquered the fortress and taken it away from the Persians. The Armenians, who form most of the city population, would have aided him. Reineggs stayed four days in Erevan and the khan told him that he would accept Russian suzerainty if asked.

Reineggs has surveyed the Erevan Province and is of the opinion that it is richer than either Karabagh or Karadagh in cotton, silk, wheat, wine, and its great variety of fruit. He offers the following as proof: the khan took one-seventh of the cotton crop, which was 68,000 *batmans*, or 13,600 *puds*, as his share. Each *pud* sells for five rubles. The khan thus collected 476,000 rubles just from the cotton raised in this small province.

From Erevan, Reineggs traveled to Khor-Virap, near Mt. Ararat, where, according to Armenian tradition, St. Gregory was interned for 13 years without any harm coming to him. The church at Khor-Virap is worthy of attention, while the remains of the Palace of Tiridates, is not. It can be concluded that Armenian art has mainly survived in its religious buildings. Reineggs wished to climb Mt. Ararat, but when the snow and cold killed one of his retainers and three horses, he abandoned the ascent. The amazing fact is that there was no snow in Ējmiatsin, Erevan, or anywhere else on the plain...Upon return to Ējmiatsin, the doctor was greeted with church bells. Since heavy snow had blocked the mountain passes, he thought of returning to Tiflis by traveling close to the borders of Turkey.

The pasha of Kars, Ibrahim, hearing that Reineggs was in Erevan, dispatched messengers and invited him to visit Kars. The two knew each other from Arabia. Reineggs declined the offer for he did not have permission to go into the interior of Turkey. He traveled through Asteroran (probably Ashtarak), Shonakal (probably Shuragöl), Bembek (Pambak), and reached Georgia. The winter, snow, and ice disappeared and he saw flowers when he reached Tiflis on 28 January of this year.

Reineggs has also sent his drawings of King Erekle and his son Giorgi. The paintings are not well done due to a fire that destroyed his paints.

In another letter, Reineggs states that King Solomon of Iberia (Imeret'i) has not changed his mind and awaits a response to his request of military aid. He adds that the region has forests for timber and has a variety of wild hemp, 14 to 16 feet in length, which will be of great use in shipbuilding. The pasha of Akish (Akhaltzikhe?) has raided the region often but has told Reineggs that he would be willing to submit to Russian rule, if he could be assured of protection. The pasha expressed concern about General Potemkin's activities in the Caucasus...King Erekle desperately wants to become an ally of Russia and is willing to become a loyal vassal. Reineggs hints that by becoming our vassal, Erekle's bountiful land would make contributions to Russia. He thinks we should send two battalions to Georgia.

Reineggs mentions that the situation in Turkey is unstable. The Kurds have made raids on Bayazid, Van, and Kars. The pasha of Van was recalled to Erzerum and was executed. Polli, a major city in Anatolia, was given to Ibrahim the brother of the rebel Zapan Oglı. The first sign of Russian troops will bring peace and tranquility to the region. The fear of Russia is great; the Christians love us and many Muslims have good memories of our presence in the Caspian. Reineggs submits the following as proof: During his stay in Erevan, news arrived that Iman Qolı Khan of Urumiye had laid siege to Tabriz. Hüseyn 'Alı Khan asked Reineggs to write a letter to Imam Qolı and the latter raised the siege upon receiving the letter. Our army will rescue the Armenians and the Azerbaijanis from tyranny. The regions of Karabagh, Karadagh (Ghap'an), Ganja, Khoi, Urumiye, Derbent, Gilan, Baku, and Mazandaran do not have local princes and are under the rule of robbers. There are 30,000 Armenian families in the districts of Karabagh and Karadagh alone, and, according to their meliks, they shall rise the moment the Russian army enters Georgia. A glance at a map will demonstrate that the distance from Enzeli to Karabagh is a three-days' march. From there to Erevan is a distance of five days and from Erevan to Khoi is another three. The population is ready for a peaceful life. Just recently Fath 'Alı Khan of Derbent attacked Ebrāhīm Khan of Shushi with 6,000 Lesghians. Peace was only restored due to General Potemkin's intervention.

There are three routes into the region: From the Caucasus Mountains; this route is short but difficult. Through the Black Sea and Imeret'i; this route will take a long time. Through the Caspian Sea; there are two options here, however. The first is through the Moghan Steppe, which is full of snakes and hampered the great Pompey's advance toward the

Caspian. The second is by water from Astrakhan and Kizliar to Karabagh, which has no barriers and is the better of the two.

Once peace is established the commercial profits will be great. In addition, if the old King of Imeret'i, Solomon died, the Russian army will be close by and will discourage any trouble. There is no danger from the ruler of Persia. He is by no means a warrior. The proof is in the fact that all the khans around Georgia pay Erekle an annual tribute of 180,000 rubles. What would they pay to have the protection of Russia? The Armenians and Georgians are so much attached to Russia that if we asked them to shave their beards, which are sacred to the Asiatics, they would do so without delay.

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Archbishop Argutinskii to General Potemkin

(11 February 1783)¹

I think that Your Excellency should have trustworthy individuals who are familiar with the Armenian language in your service. I recommend Ivan Lazarich and Lazar Lazarich. They can be of service to you in all confidential matters. They are known to the Patriarch at Ararat, as well as to all the Armenians of that region. Another individual, Colonel Ivan Petrovich Gasparov, the commandant of Taganrog, is also trustworthy. He speaks Armenian and Persian. You can ask Prince Potemkin to transfer him to Kizliar and you can use his services in Armenia, Persia, and Georgia. He is familiar with the customs of those regions and knows many people there. There is also a certain Major Stepan Grigor'evich Sumbatov, who can be useful in undercover operations. Please be assured that these recommendations are not for my personal gain, but are for your benefit...

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General Potemkin to Kat'oghikos Ghukas

(15 February 1783)²

Archbishop Argutinskii was dispatching a messenger, Archdeacon Avet, to Your Eminence and I took the liberty of sending this letter along. Her Imperial Majesty, the Mother of Our Nation, has ordered me to prepare

¹*TsGADA*, Coll. 23, group 1, file 13 (part 3/I), f. 87.

²*TsGADA*, Coll. 23, group 1, file 13 (pt. 5), f. 37.

our forces stationed in Astrakhan and the Caucasus for action. You have indicated that you would be willing to assist us. I hope that when the time comes you shall be ready to join forces with us Christians and serve the wise and generous Great Catherine, our August Autocrat, thus assuring the glorification of your own name...

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General Potemkin to Prince Potemkin(21 February 1783)¹

At King Erekle's request I sent a message to Fath 'Alī Khan of Derbent asking him not to harass Georgians and other Christians. The khan has a small number of troops and cannot pay them regularly. He would probably not be able to control the Christian-populated regions for long. In any case I wrote to remind him that the Armenians are under our protection and that he should desist from any barbaric acts against them or other Christians...²

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Meliks of Karabagh to General Potemkin(4 March 1783)³

We the meliks of Karabagh, that is: Melik Adam Israyēlean of Jraberd, Melik Abov Hovsēp'ean of Gulistan, Melik Shahnazar Husēinean of Varanda, Melik Bakhtam Aramean of Dizak, Melik Alavērdi Mirzakhanean of Khachen, Melik Harut'iwn Mnatsakanean of Getashen, Melik Gaspar Yavroh of the city of Ganja, Melik Gabriyēl Voskanapadean, Melik Dawit' Barkhudarean of Tegun, Melik Hovsēp' Avanean of Siwnik' and the meliks of Shamshedil and Shamkhor shall be ready to assist the Russian forces when they arrive in our domains.

We are also prepared to provide wheat, barley, grapes, pomegranates, quinces, apples, figs, fish, and beasts of burden. We shall also provide

¹*TsGVIA*, Coll. 52, group 1.194, file 286 (pt. 3), f. 52.

²Potemkin's letter to the khan is in *TsGADA*, Coll. 23, group 1, file 13 (pt. 5), ff. 41-42.

³*TsGADA*, Coll. 23, group 1, file 13 (pt. 3/1), f. 142.

silver, copper, and other ores. Our people are armed and ready to fight. Our messenger, Mkrtych', will provide further details.¹

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*Kat'oghikos Hovhannēs and the Meliks of Karabagh
to General Potemkin
(5 March 1783)*²

The messenger of Archbishop Hovsēp', Gabriyēl, arrived here with Your Excellency's letter. Our people are very happy that Her August Majesty will liberate us from the rule of the infidel. The Armenian people are ready to rise just as they did against the Persians and Turks during the reign of His Imperial Majesty, Peter the First...The five Armenian provinces of Karabagh are prepared to raise arms and join your troops. The kat'oghikos, the bishops, the meliks, the yūzbaşıs, as well as the leaders of the villages are ready to act. We have the necessary provisions for your men in winter and summer. Nāder Shah's army of 300,000 men spent three years in Karabagh and we had no problem feeding them. We are capable of housing twenty to thirty thousand Russian troops for twenty to thirty years. The khans of these parts fear Russia and the moment your army arrives they shall all submit. The Russian army can summer Alp'av and winter in Moghan. Nāder Shah's army spent the summers in the cool mountains and pastures in the first and the winter in the second. Thousands upon thousands can camp there. There is wheat, barley, millet, spelt, sweat peas, green beans, kidney beans, vegetable oil, silk, and cotton. There is also crude oil,³ and salt, gold, silver, lead, iron, alum and copper mines. There are horses, camels, donkeys, bulls, sheep and goats. As to fruit, there are varieties of grapes, pomegranates, apples, pears, plums, mulberries, cherries, Bukhara plumes,⁴ green plums,⁵ figs, and peaches.⁶ Some of these fruits ripen in the summer, others in the fall. The Kura River has plenty of fish...We are anxiously awaiting your arri-

¹Folio 145 contains additional data delivered by Mkrtych'. It states that Fath 'Alī Khan of Derbent and Hājji Khan of Shakki had conducted raids into Karabagh and had damaged both Muslim and Armenian villages.

²*TsGADA*, Coll.15, group 1, file 149, ff. 190-191.

³Text has *neft*.

⁴Text has *al-bukhara*.

⁵Text has *alucha*, a small sour green plum eaten with salt.

⁶Text has *shaftalu*.

val with 30,000 or more troops, whom we can house and feed. Fath 'Alī Khan, Moḥammad Sa'īd Khan, Aḡāsī Khan of Shemakhi, Ḥājji Khan of Shakki, and Ḥasan Khan of Talin have invaded our region and although they have caused damage to the Armenian settlements, they have hurt the Muslim villages more. Our Ebrāhīm Khan of Shushi is an enemy of Fath 'Alī Khan. The khans of Tabriz, Khoi, and Urumiye, fearing Russia, have friendly relations with Ebrāhīm Khan.

Hovhannēs Kat'oghikos (1763),¹ Esayi Vardapet (1760), Grigor Vardapet (1763),² Ohannēs Vardapet (1763), Hakob Vardapet, Israyēl Vardapet, Bishop Eghiazar, Archbishop Meliksedek, Melik Adam Israyēlean, Melik Abov Hovsēp'ean, Melik Daniēl Bek, Gabriyēl Jalalean, Melik Bek Jalalean, Melik Israyēl Bek.³

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Catherine the Great to Prince Potemkin(30 March 1783)⁴

We decree that the Armenian, Greek, and Catholic residents of the Ekaterinodar Guberniia be permitted to have their own courts. The Armenians are to have their own town council as well. We allocate an additional annual sum of 4,674 rubles to sustain their expenses.

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Prince Potemkin to General Potemkin(6 April 1783)⁵

From our instructions you must have deduced the importance of an alli-

¹Date of consecration.

²Text has 2112 instead of 1212 (1763).

³A similar letter was sent to Archbishop Argutinskii on 7 March, *TsGADA*, Coll. 15, group 1, file 149, ff. 192-193. Similar letters were sent by Melik Abov to General Potemkin and Archbishop Argutinskii, *ibid.*, Coll. 23, group 1, file 13 (pt. 3/1), ff. 171, 188. A similar letter was sent on 5 July by Kat'oghikos Hovhannēs and the meliks to General Potemkin, *TsGVIA*, Coll. 52, group 1/194 (pt. 1), f. 186 and by the kat'oghikos to Argutinskii, *AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Armenia, group 100/3 (1797-1799), file 464, f. 161.

⁴PSZR, XXI, no. 15700.

⁵*TsGVIA*, Coll. 52, group 2, file 90, f. 8.

ance with King Erekle. You are to do everything in your power to acquire his trust.

You are to overthrow the khan of Shushi, Ebrāhīm. Once that is done the Armenian population of Karabagh will be independent from everyone and will look only to Russia. You are to create excellent living conditions there so that the Armenians of the Armenian Province [Erevan-Nakhichevan] will follow their example [declare their independence] or will leave their homes and settle in Karabagh.

In order to accomplish this plan you have to occupy Derbent. I am giving you four battalions and plenty of artillery and cavalry to do this. After that you shall be near Karabagh. Do not forget to seek the best route to Georgia.

The Caspian Flotilla will be under your command. Use it to bring supplies from Astrakhan to Derbent and to assure the safety of our commerce...

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Prince Potemkin to Catherine the Great

(19 March 1783)¹

I have ordered General Potemkin to gain the obedience of Ebrāhīm Khan of Shushi. At the appropriate time, his province, populated by Armenians, will be ruled by the Armenians and will start the revival of Christian rule in Asia. Such is the promise I have given the meliks of Karabagh in the name of Your Majesty.

I find Doctor Reineggs zealous, but frivolous. I shall order that he return to the Caucasian Line and shall replace him in Georgia with Colonel Burnashev.² I have ordered General Potemkin to begin action against Fath 'Alī Khan's neighbors, including Ebrāhīm Khan. I have also ordered him to occupy Derbent with his troops.³

¹*Ibid.*, file 32, f. 1.

²Colonel Stepan D. Burnashev was in charge of the Russian troops in Tiflis following the Treaty of Georgievsk.

³On 21 May General Potemkin wrote to Burnashev instructing him to prepare to move on Derbent and Karabagh-Karadagh. After collecting the necessary provisions he was to move on to Erevan, *TsGADA*, Coll. 23, group 1, file 13, f. 86.

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General Potemkin to Prince Potemkin(27 May 1783)¹

The Armenian Patriarch, Luke [Ghukas], has sent me a letter—a Russian translation is enclosed—asking me to reply without delay.² I am sending him the following letter so that the Armenians shall prepare provisions and fodder for our troops and horses.

To His Eminence Luke, the Patriarch of Greater and Lesser Armenia and Pastor of the Armenian people:

We have received your letter delivered by Archdeacon Avetik... Her Majesty has decreed that the Armenian people be freed from the yoke of the infidel and His Grace Prince Grigorii Aleksandrovich Potemkin has ordered me to prepare our arms for that purpose. Her Highness has raised the sword of God and I ask you to prepare your people... Assure them that not a grain of wheat shall be taken without proper payment. I am sending you a list of the necessary provisions so that you may prepare them...³

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General Potemkin to the Commandant of Mozdok, Taganov(1 June 1783)⁴

On 30 June 1768 Her Majesty ordered that no Armenian cleric be permitted to cross into Russia without the permission of Kat'oghikos Simēon. I am reminding you that the order is still in effect and that no Armenian cleric can enter Russia without the permission of the kat'oghikos of Ararat.⁵

¹*TsGADA*, Col. 23, group 1, file 13 (pt. 5), ff. 89-90.

²The letter was written on 10 April and assured Potemkin that the Armenian of Erevan shall be ready to assist the Russians, *TsGADA*, Coll. 23, group 1, file 13 (pt. 3), ff. 194-195. A similar letter was sent by Ghukas on 28 June, *ibid.*, Coll. 11, group 1, file 957 (pt. 1), f. 23.

³The letter was dated 3 June and was delivered by Ensign Markov.

⁴*TsGADA*, Coll. 23, group 1, file 13, f. 93.

⁵This was in response to Argutinskii's request dated 31 May in which the archbishop requested that no Armenian archbishop, bishop, vardapet, or any other cleric be permitted to enter Russia without the consent of Ējmiatsin, *ibid.*, file 13 (pt. 3/1), f. 221.

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Colonel Burnashev to General Potemkin

(16 June 1783)¹

I was planning to send you a road map of Georgia in my report of 11 June, sent via the Cossack Kurachinov. But I was not able to complete it. Your messenger, Gabriel Karakhanov, arrived here on the 11th and that same evening I also met with ensign Markov. I have now prepared the road map from Mozdok to Tiflis for His Excellency Prince Potemkin. His Majesty, King Erekle, has assured me that he will not come to terms with his neighbors without informing me. He has shown me the letter he wrote to the pasha of Akhaltsikhe regarding the movement of Russian troops. I have told him that I was not aware of any troop movements into Georgia and that we do not plan to endanger our peace with the Porte. King Erekle has already ordered his engineers to built bridges in the village of Stepantsminda (Kazbeki).² I shall leave for Imeret'i tomorrow.

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Kat'oghikos Ghukas to General Potemkin

(28 June 1783)³

We have prayed that God rescue the nation of Haik from the yoke of the infidel...I hope that Your Excellency has received our assurances of preparations to aid you, in every possible way...The meliks of Artsakh and their forces are ready to assist you and we hope that others will carry out their promises, rid us from the terror of the infidel, and place our entire province under the protection of Your Excellency...

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Kat'oghikos Hovhannēs and Meliks of Karabagh to General Potemkin

(5 July 1783)⁴

We received Your Excellency's letter delivered by the envoy Gabriel [Karakhanov]...We pray that you, your family, and His Excellency

¹*TsGADA*, Coll. 23, group 1, file 13 (pt. 3/1) f. 248.

²The settlement has a number of gorges and is located on the Georgian military road (46 km south of Ordzhonikidze) at the foot of Mt. Kazbek.

³*TsGADA*, Coll. 11, group 1, file 957, f. 23.

⁴*TsGVIA*, Coll. 52, group 1/194, file 286 (pt. 1), f. 186.

Prince Potemkin continue to enjoy a long life and excellent health and succeed in your military undertakings...We once again reiterate that Your Excellency's forces shall be provided with food and fodder. We are ready to feed you free of charge, but since Your Excellency wishes to pay for your provisions, we inform you that wheat flour costs 40 kopeks per *pud* and barley 20 kopeks per *pud*. We are prepared to supply your men and horses with summer and winter feed and quarters...Your arrival shall move the entire population into action...The reason for the delay in our message was because a large number of people, including the son of Ebrāhīm Khan with 200 of his men, arrived for the funeral of Melik Adam. They stayed a week. We feared that our message might be intercepted.

Whatever information Your Excellency may need about current affairs in this region can be obtained from Archbishop Hovsēp', or from Mirzabek, as well as the envoy Gabriel...The local Muslims, hearing that Russian troops are on the move, have begun to repair their forts. Do not delay your move into Karabagh. We are prepared to supply an army of 50,000 men.

Kat'oghikos of Aghuank' at Gandzasar: Hovhannēs

Hovsēp' Israyēlean, Melik Gabriyēl Mēlikbēkean of Khachen, Melik Bakhtam Aramean of Dizak, Melik Abov Hovsēp'ean of Gulistan, and Melik Mejlum Adamean of Jraberd;¹Ohan Petrosean, Hovsēp' Arut'iwnean, Archbishops Esayi, Hakob, and Meliksedek, and Vardapet Hovhannēs Nazarean.²

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Gabriel Karakhanov's Report to General Potemkin (July 1783)³

1. Upon arrival in Karabagh I delivered Your Excellency's letter to the kat'oghikos and the meliks. They were overjoyed. Melik Adam Is-

¹Melik Shahnazar's signature is absent. He was the Melik of Varanda and the father-in-law of Ebrāhīm Khan of Shushi.

²On the same day Kat'oghikos Hovhannēs wrote a letter to Argutinskii informing him of the above. A few weeks later Argutinskii responded that the Russians are preparing their advance by widening and clearing the road to Georgia, *AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Armenia, group 100/3 (1797-1799), file 464, ff. 161-162.

³*TsGADA*, Coll. 23, group 1, file 13 (pt. 13/2), ff. 309-311.

raelov was very sick and, realizing his imminent demise, begged me to inform you that the Armenian people are ready to receive the Russian troops.

2. Melik Bakhtam Aramov and all the others, in the presence of the kat'oghikos, took an oath to assist the Russian troops and affixed their seals to the document.
3. The Melik of Varanda, Shahnazar Huseinov, asked me if Russian troops are preparing to enter Karabagh and if the other meliks are ready to assist them. I responded that I had heard rumors, but could not confirm their accuracy.
4. Ebrāhīm Khan has gathered his men, his brother and his clan, as well as his father-in-law, Melik Shahnazar, and told them that he planned to fortify the fortress of Shushi. His brother and relatives responded that the fortress is perfect and such efforts would be wasted. Melik Shahnazar, however, criticized their response and advised repairs. Ebrāhīm Khan ordered the repairs, but his brother, relatives, and the population did not respond. They were angry that he had ignored their advice and had preferred that of his [Armenian] father-in-law. They requested that he surrender the melik to them so that they could execute him. The khan, however, took the advice of the melik and gathered one hundred men from each Armenian melik, as well as men from other Armenian regions, to fortify Shushi. Some 1,000 men were brought to do the work. Fearing his own relatives, the khan has also received 300 Lesghian troops from his brother-in-law, Uma Khan of Avaria.¹
5. Although Ebrāhīm Khan feigns friendship with King Erekle, he has send troops to Imam Qolī Khan, an enemy of Erekle, to attack Aḥmad Khan of Khoi, an ally of Erekle.
6. The son of Melik Shahnazar, Jamshid Bek, has informed Ebrāhīm Khan that Melik Abov has dispatched messengers to Russia and to General Potemkin. The khan was very angry and replied that he was aware of the fact that the other meliks had joined Melik Abov in collusion.²

¹Sources refer to him as Umma Khan, Um Khan, Om Khan, or 'Omar Khan. He was the khan of the Avars and was married to the sister of Ebrāhīm Khan, see Bournoutian, *Qarabagh*, p. 84, n. 223.

²On 5 August General Potemkin wrote to Prince Potemkin regarding the conditions in Karabagh. He stated that Ebrāhīm Khan was prepared to rob and kill the Armenian population and that he (Potemkin) had written to all the Mus-

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King Erekle II to General Potemkin(July 1783)¹

We received Your Excellency's letter delivered by Major Makhvilov... You requested that we repair the road to Stepantsminda, we had already begun to do so even prior to your message... As to Ebrāhīm Khan, I do not have the necessary information you requested. One of his subjects arrived here but nothing concrete is known. Ebrāhīm Khan has not written to me for a long time. My information comes from other people who have informed me that he has 700 Lesghian troops at the fortress of Shushi. The reason for this is because he has quarreled with his brother and fears for his life. I have dispatched a trusted messenger to him 25 days ago and await news.

The pasha of Akhaltsikhe is clever and, hearing that work is being done on the mountain passes to Georgia, he has begun to gather troops. He has also written to Fath 'Alī Khan of Derbent and the Daghestanis to send troops to aid him. He has brought some 300 men from Erzerum as well. We had previously sent a secretary called Mīrzā Gorgīn, who had served the pasha well and was trusted by him. The pasha has requested that we sent Gorgin back to him but I have refused. The pasha has sent Lesghian troops to attack our border villages. They have killed some people, but my troops faced them and killed seven of them in two skirmishes... Colonel Burnashev has returned from Imeret'i and shall report to you on the situation there.

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The Treaty of Georgievsk(24 July 1783)²

Article I: His Highness, the King of K'art'li and Kakhet'i [Erekle] does not recognize any ruler, be he Persian or other, over his authority save that of Her Imperial Majesty, the Empress of Russia. He gives his loyalty to the Russian throne and shall help its government whenever needed.

lim khans sending them gifts and inviting them to have friendly relations with Russia, *TsGADA*, Coll. 23, group 1, file 13 (pt. 5), f. 129.

¹*TsGADA*, Coll. 23, group 1, file 13 (pt. 3/2), f. 312 (in Georgian).

²*PSZR*, XXI, no. 15835. The first draft of the treaty is in *Gramoty*, II (pt. 2), 34-38.

Article II: Her Imperial Majesty promises that she and her heirs shall never change the ruling dynasty of K'art'li-Kakhet'i...

Article III: The kings of Georgia, on succeeding the throne, shall request and receive their insignia of investiture from Russia...

Article IV: His Highness, in order to demonstrate his alliance with Russia and affirm the supremacy of the Imperial government promises not to undertake any discussions or negotiations with foreign representatives, without the consent of Russian authorities...

Article V: In order to have close contacts with Her Majesty's government, His Highness will have a resident envoy in St. Petersburg and a Russian resident shall live in Tiflis. The Russian government promises to treat the Georgian envoy with the same respect it accords its own princes and ministers and to pay his expenses.

Article VI: Her Majesty's government shall view the people of Georgia as its own and shall view its enemies as the enemies of Russia. The royal house of Erekle, son of T'eimuraz, shall be considered the sole ruling house of Georgia. His Highness shall maintain control over the laws, customs, taxes, and his soldiers without interference from Russia...

Article VII: His Highness and his heirs promise to be ready to assist Russia in time of war; to cooperate with the commanders of Her Majesty to defend the empire; to promote those who serve the Russian State...

Article VIII: The Georgian kat'olikos (catholicos) shall become a member of the Holy Synod and will be accorded the same privileges and respect as the highest religious authorities in Russia. Only the metropolitans of Kiev, Novgorod, Moscow, and St. Petersburg shall be regarded higher in stature. He shall be the first among the second group of archbishops of the empire.

Article IX: Georgian nobles shall be given the same privileges as Russian nobles. His Highness shall send the names of all noble families to Russia and they shall be enrolled in the lists of Russian nobility.

Article X: All Georgians may travel and reside in Russia without permits. Russia will aid Georgian prisoners in the hands of Turks, Persians, or others and Georgia shall accord the same to Russian prisoners...

Article XI: Georgian merchants may trade in Russia and shall have the same privileges as Russian merchants, provided that His Highness sets up trade facilities and border crossings for Russian merchants to trade freely in Georgian cities.

Article XII: This agreement has no time limit. Any modifications shall be made only by mutual consent.

Article XIII: This treaty has to be ratified within six months.¹

General Paul Potemkin

Prince Ivan Bagration

Prince Garsevan Tchavtchavadze²

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Hovsēp ' Argutinskii to Melik Shahnazar

(11 August 1783)³

Beloved ruler of Varanda, Melik Shahnazar. May God's grace be upon you and your children.

Although we took our time in writing to you, it was due to the unfavorable conditions...Our letter is not for my personal gain, but for the benefit of yourself and your community. You are aware that Her Majesty has asked Prince Grigorii Aleksandrovich Potemkin to appoint his nephew, Paul Sergeevich Potemkin, as the commander of the Russian forces in the Caucasus. He has a large and mighty army under his command. King Erekle has already submitted to Russia and the Muslim khans have followed suit. Even Ebrāhīm Khan, my old acquaintance, has sent a letter to General Potemkin, which describes his peaceful intentions. We ask you as an Armenian at the court of the khan to impress upon the khan to receive an emissary from Potemkin. We also ask that the khan send your son Jamshid Bek to meet with Potemkin. I assure you that he, or another trusted member of your entourage, will be well treated

¹Ratified and signed by Erekle in Tiflis in November 1783. On 13 October, Prince Potemkin wrote to Empress Catherine that Colonel Burnashev had arrived in Tiflis with Russian troops and that the city was illuminated. Festivities and prayers continued for sometime with Erekle inviting dignitaries to his palace where coffee and food was served amidst the sounds of Persian music, *TsGVIA*, Coll. 52, group 2, file 29, ff. 33-35.

²Four separate articles were appended: in the first Erekle agreed that any dispute between him and Solomon of Imeret'i would be referred to Russian arbitration; the second committed Russia to maintain two battalions of Russian troops with four cannons in Tiflis; the third made provisions for the two armies to cooperate in the event of war; the fourth promised to restore Georgia's ancient territories which were occupied by the Ottomans, *Gramoty*, II (pt. 2), 38-40.

³*AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Armenia, group 100/3 (1797-1799), file 464, ff. 166-168.

and that you shall benefit from such an exchange. Furthermore Her Majesty's government shall decorate him. I ask this in the friendship that you displayed while I was a guest at your house and as your Christian duty. I have spoken with your old friend Mirzabek Vaganov,¹ who serves General Potemkin and who shall find a messenger to deliver this letter. Since we do not have a Persian interpreter here, I ask that you translate my message for the khan. You are to convince the khan as well as other meliks to send an envoy to Potemkin...²

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General Potemkin to Kat'oghikos Ghukas
(12 September 1783)³

The loyal servant of Her Majesty, Mirzabek Vaganov, has died and there is no one here to translate letters into Armenian. I, therefore, dispatch the faithful Gabriel to you so that he may verbally tell you of the situation here and to deliver Archbishop Argutinskii's letters to you. By the way, the road through the Caucasus Mountains is ready and the troops will pass easily through it. Your concerns about saving Armenia occupy my mind as well and the day of deliverance of the Armenians from their yoke is my foremost concern.

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General Potemkin to Prince Potemkin
(22 September 1783)⁴

Following the death of Lieutenant Colonel Vaganov, we have no Armenian interpreter. I have asked his nephew, Corporal Varlaam Vaganov, a member of our cavalry corps, to help us temporarily. I ask that Your Excellency provide me with another Armenian translator, preferably from

¹On 3 September Vaganov died of old age and General Potemkin requested that V. Iakoby, the governor of Astrakhan, find a suitable replacement, a man who was fluent in Russian and Armenian, *TsGADA*, Coll. 23, group 1, file 13 (pt. 5), f. 149.

²On the same day, Argutinskii sent a letter to Kat'oghikos Hovhannēs, informing him that he had sent a messenger to Melik Shahnazar, *AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Armenia, group 100/3 (1797-1799), file 464, f. 160.

³*TsGADA*, Coll. 23, group 1, file 13 (pt. 5), f. 152.

⁴*TsGADA*, Coll. 23, group 1, file 13 (pt. 5), f. 155.

the officer rank. The volume of our correspondence with Armenians necessitates more than one interpreter. I request that you permit Vasilii Makarov Khastatov, an Armenian from St. Petersburg to undertake this task.

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Armenian and Tatar Merchants to Consul Tumanovskii(12 October 1783)¹

Āqā Raftī, Hedāyat Khan's buyer and his *rahdar*,² Sa'īd Rezā, force us to sell our goods at a low price to Hedāyat Khan. They have forbidden other merchants to buy our goods at a higher price. Anyone who dares to buy our goods at a higher price is punished and the khan confiscates the merchandise. Merchants from Rasht are not permitted to trade with us and the two men have made it impossible for anyone to buy our merchandise forcing us to sell only to them at a designated price... We are also forced to pay 2.50 rubles for every *batman* of silk in duties. We have sustained losses and are going bankrupt. There is no use trading here and we beg that you tell us how to submit our concerns to a higher authority.

Armenian merchants from Astrakhan: Vasilii Abramov, Zakhar Moseev, Navasart Magakeev, Manatsakan Grigor'ev, Ghazar Davydov, Papa Arinunov, Iakov Tumanov, Mkrtich Petrosov, Saghatel Meseev, Melkom Popov, Vartan Petrov, Avetik Davydov, and Gabriel Sergeev. Tatar merchants from Astrakhan: Zhanus Zhanachaev, Magmet Gurbanaliev.

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Hosein 'Alī Khan of Erevan to General Potemkin(October 1783)³

I am aware of King Erekle's devotion to Russia. Count Major Apraksin informed me of it. I wish to assure you that I am very pleased with King Erekle's decision and declare my loyalty to Russia, as well. My province shall maintain its friendly relations with the Russian State and peace shall reign in the Erevan region. I shall remain your friend for the rest of

¹*TsGADA*, Coll. 15, group 1, file 192, ff. 44-45.

²Toll collector or customs official.

³*TsGADA*, Coll. 23, group 1, file 13 (pt. 3/2), f. 482. The letter arrived on November 3rd.

my life. I had the fortune to personally assure Apraksin of my devotion to Russia and to King Erekle.

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*Archbishop Argutinskii to Step'an Ter-Sahakean*¹

(15 November 1783)²

On the 11th of this month I wrote to you asking you to inform me of the conditions in Karabagh. The commander-in-chief and I were notified that the Turks have appointed a new commander, who resides in Bondos. They have given fresh troops to the ruler of Akhaltsikhe and are preparing for war with us. I request that you, my trusted friend, dispatch a loyal person to ascertain the conditions there [western Armenia]. Do the Turks still maintain commanders in Kars and Erzerum? What do they think of our agreements with Georgia? Are they willing to come to terms with us? What are the Persians planning to do? Once you gather this information send it immediately to us via a confidant. Be assured that he shall be paid whatever you designate. You and he shall also receive the thanks of our general and will be decorated...If you experience any difficulties in transmitting the information to us you can send it to the priest Abraham in Tiflis, who will forward it to General Potemkin.

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Colonel Burnashev to General Potemkin

(20 November 1783)³

The khan of Erevan, Hōsein, died on November 9th. King Erekle, as the main ruler of the region, was informed. The two sons of the late khan, as well as the Armenian religious hierarchy, sent a deputation to King Erekle. They requested that he appoint the eldest son of Hōsein 'Alī Khan, Ulamali,⁴ born to his first wife, the daughter of Šamdīn Āqā the Kurdish chieftain.

¹Ter-Sahakean resided in Erevan and sent confidential reports to Potemkin and Argutinskii. He was later sent to St. Petersburg as the envoy of Ējmiatsin.

²AVPR, Russia's Relations with Armenia, group 100/3 (1797-1799), file 461, f. 166. Written in Georgievsk.

³TsGADA, Coll. 23, group 1, file 13 (pt. 3/2), f. 573.

⁴Actually Ġolām 'Alī Khan (1783-1784).

King Erekle dispatched his son-in-law,¹ Prince Bagration, to install the eldest son as the new khan and to present him with gifts. I am enclosing the request of the Erevan deputation, which was forwarded to me by the khan of Nukha.² The inhabitants of Jar and the Lesghians are at peace for they fear the might of the Russian army.

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Armenians of Mozdok to Archbishop Argutinskii(20 November 1783)³

Your Eminence, Hovsēp', the archbishop of the Armenians in Russia. We the undersigned request that we be permitted to move to Ekaterinograd, which was erected by Her Majesty's order. Twenty years ago we came from various regions and settled in Mozdok seeking a peaceful life in Russia. Her Majesty's manifesto promised us a thirty-year exemption from taxes and civic duties. We did not keep a copy of the manifesto with us... In the last two years we have been forced to perform services for the State, mainly by billeting troops in our houses. We have to feed them and provide fodder for their horses. Some of our Armenians have returned to Georgia. ... We wish to have the same privileges as the Armenians of [New] Nakhichevan. We wish to have our own district where we can settle, build churches, stores, and markets... We request that the State help us finance our move. We have spent much money on cultivating silk gardens and building stores and homes. Her Majesty has helped people who were unfriendly toward Russia, why can She not aid us, who have been always devoted to Her Highness... We need time to sell our orchards, homes, and businesses. We wish to travel to Circassia to sell our goods. We cannot make our move without the permission of you, our archbishop. We request that you intercede on our behalf with Prince Potemkin... Archpriest Asatur, the priests Tomas Nazarov and Baghdasar, Bogdan Artem'ev, Mankasar Sartarov, Zakhar Mamev, Dovlat Egorov, Mikhail Petrov, Kaplan Avetikov, Artemii Shakhnazarov, Nazar Torosov, Martyn Danilov, the elders Ivanis, Moses Danilov, Isai Art'emev, Grigori Martynov, Artemi Makhitarov, Nikita Ivanov, Peter Sergeev, Melik Grigor'ev, Sergei Martynov, Grigor Toma-

¹The Russian term *ziat'* can also mean brother-in-law.

²Nukha was the main city of Shakki, hence the khan of Shakki.

³*TsGADA*, Coll. 23, group 1, file 13 (pt. 3/2), ff. 551-554.

sov, Stepan Grigor'ev, Artemii Khukasov, Ivan Avakov, Zakar Khosrov, Nikolai Tomasov, Avet Edigarov, Bezhan Papov, and Sergei Ivanisov.

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Step'an Ter-Sahakean to General Potemkin

(22 December 1783)¹

The khan of Tabriz, Najār Qolī, has died. Yūsef Qodādād has replaced him. He is 25 years old and is the brother of Salmān Khan, a khan of Khoi. There are few troops in Tabriz and Aḥmad Khan of Khoi has few troops as well.

The khan of Erevan has died as well and Erekle has installed the late khan's son, Ġolām 'Alī, as the new governor...The feeling here is that the Russian troops shall not come...The inhabitants around Shushi have no one to defend them from attacks. Some 300 households have relocated to Erevan from Shushi. Others are seeking new places to settle. I have no news from the meliks of Karabagh for deep snow has blocked the road from Ganja. The route from Nakhichevan is dangerous as usual. All I can report is that last year the meliks had 5,000 men in arms.

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Draft Proposal for an Armeno-Russian Treaty

(1783)²

1. There has to be respect and trust between our kingdoms. We are all brothers and do not have any quarrels. Russians are not against our Church and we are not against theirs. Christ only gave faith to all. The same Church brings salvation to all. Christ instructed his disciples to love each other. All Christian nations must follow that ideal.

2. Neither Armenians nor Russians should welcome those among them who have left the other's fold. They shall cause trouble and division.

3. Any Muslim who wishes to convert, can choose whichever of the two Churches he desires.

4. The two kingdoms shall sign an eternal treaty of friendship.

5. There should be an adequate presence of Russian troops in Armenia, led by a general. They shall protect the people and frighten the Persian

¹*TsGADA*, Coll. 23, group 1, file 13 (pt. 7), f. 169.

²*Diwan*, IV, 731-737. Argutinskii was the probable author.

and Turkish rulers. An heir to the Armenian throne shall reside in Russia.¹

6. As in the days of the Roman and Persian empires, the Armenians shall pay a tribute to Russia.

7. Her Majesty will elect our king, either from among one of us or a person trusted by Her Majesty.

8. Whoever is deemed the Armenian king shall follow Armenian law. He shall come to Vagharspahat and shall be anointed at Ējmiatsin as did our former kings.

9. A capital should be prepared in Vagharshapat, Ani, or another suitable city in the Ararat region.

10. The coat of arms of Armenia should display Noah's Ark. The flag will have three colors, red, green and blue signifying the rainbow, which God gave Noah at the end of the flood as his sign of love and peace.

11. The image of Gregory the Illuminator can also be used on the coat of arms or the flag.

12. The first medal of Armenia will have the image of Vronika's handkerchief, which was sent to King Abgar of Armenia. It should be presented to victorious generals and has to have a red ribbon.

13. The royal seal of Armenia should resemble one used by the Arshakuni kings. A lion's head to symbolize pre-Christian Armenia, a lamb to signify Christian Armenia, and the two lions of Cilicia. The seal should be represented on our flags, coins, and other royal emblem.

14. Armenian nobles and princes who can prove their ancestry may regain their ancestral lands. The order of the Armenian nobility will be recorded and observed.

15. There should be no slaves in our lands. As in the past we shall all serve our king. The king can raise anyone to a high position and give him a village. The village and its inhabitants will then belong to the nobleman. He can sell the said village with its inhabitants. He may not sell the inhabitants without the land. He cannot sell the water and other property of that land separately.² When the Byzantines took over our land, they wanted us to be the personal slaves of their kings. Our people did not agree and allied with the Baghdad Caliphs to be free.³

¹In ancient times, the heir to the Armenian throne lived as a well-treated guest (hostage) in Rome or Persia (depending on the period) to guarantee the friendship of his nation.

²The Armenians copied the Russian law regarding property and serfs.

³Refers to the 652 agreement of Theodorus Rshtuni with Mu'awiyah.

16. There should be an agreement for trade between our kingdoms. Specific duties have to be agreed upon. Armenia shall have a port on the Caspian Sea.

17. Deserters from either side should be subject to special regulations. There should be agreements regarding immigrants from either side. There should be a protocol of how to receive kings or nobles from either side.

18. Our king, the leader of our entire nation, should be supervised the election of the Armenian *kat'oghikos*. Grigorii Potemkin, who is especially kind to our nation, should be our ambassador to Her Majesty.¹

1. The Armenian king will appoint all the *nakhharars* (lords).

2. The chief minister of Armenia has to be an Armenian and be a member of the Armenian Apostolic Church.

3. The Russian government will send 6,000 troops to Armenia: 2,000 cavalry, 2,000 infantry, and 2,000 artillery. They shall have their own commanders, cannons, supplies and provisions. They shall remain in Armenia for twenty years to protect us from invasions. All their expenses and salaries shall be born by the Armenian State. During their stay in Armenia, all their armaments and fortifications shall be under the authority of the Russian commander-in-chief.

4. The Armenian kingdom will pay 60,000 *tomans* for the use of the Russian troops. 30,000 of it will be in kind, that is, bread, meat and wine and the rest for the salaries.

5. The 6,000 Russian troops shall return to Russia according to the following schedule: 2,000 of them after 10 years, 2,000 after 15 years, and the final 2,000 after 20 years. The soldiers shall retain their ranks. For every 2,000 soldiers that leave 20,000 *tomans* shall be reduced from the annual payments.

6. If at the end of the 20 years the Armenian kingdom has not paid all the above sums, the debt cannot be forgiven. It shall be paid within 16 years, in ten parts, without interest.

¹It is interesting to note that the Armenians were willing to give their king a role in the election of the *kat'oghikos*. This was due to historical precedence as well as the control of the Russian monarch over his own Holy Synod.

7.The Armenian royal house shall pay the Russian Tsar 20 *metqāls*¹ of pure gold, three horses and 6 rams, as a sign of respect and tribute.

8.The Armenian royal house will recognize the Russian kings as their liberators from slavery unequivocally and in perpetuity. Friends of Russia shall be considered friends of Armenia and her enemies the enemies of Armenia. Russia will act friends to our friends and shun our enemies.

9.If the Russian ruler requests Armenian soldiers from the Armenian king, Armenia is obliged to give up to 6,000 troops. Russia shall pay their expenses according to the same aforementioned conditions imposed on Armenia.

10.Armenians that serve in Russia shall be accorded the same awards and salaries as Russians.

11.Armenians should respect the rites of the Russian Church. Armenians should follow their own rites in their own churches (in Russia) without interference.²

12.Artisans and merchants from both sides can freely enter and exit the Russian Empire and Armenia with their goods and manufactured items upon payment of the required dues.

13.Criminals who have fled from Russia to Armenia shall have their lives spared. All other fines and punishments will remain in effect. Their debts or loss of title will not be forgiven or restored. They shall be judged according to the laws of the land there have escaped to.³If the refugee is a churchman, he shall be handed to the respective prelate.⁴

14.The king of Armenia shall rule over the land and the people according to the Armenian law.

15.Russia shall recognize the royal house of Armenia as the kings of Armenia. The king's ambassador shall represent him in St. Petersburg.

16.Since the Armenians, Albanians and Georgians have been united from ancient times and have great love for each other, Russians can also help Georgians and Albanians without any objections from the Armenians.⁵

¹Measure of weight equal to 24 *noḳod* (peas) or 5 grams. The tribute was obviously symbolic, since 100 grams (some three ounces) of gold had little value.

²Armenians were concerned about the relations of the Holy Synod and the Russian throne. Peter had abolished the Russian patriarchate and had put the Russian Church under the control of the State. This was foreign to the Armenians, whose Church was independent from the State.

³Armenians thus did not grant capitulation rights to Russia.

⁴Armenia, once again, insisted on the separation of Church and State.

⁵This was to calm the Georgians and the Muslims of present-day Azerbaijan.

17. In order to guarantee the payment of the 6,000 Russian troops, four-tenths of the entire income of Armenia shall be put aside until the debt is paid. The other four-tenths shall be given to the kat'oghikos for upkeep of churches and monasteries (education), taking care of the homeless, the poor, the sick, the orphans, etc.¹ The rest of the funds held by the king's treasury would go for general expenses.

18. The payments to Russia shall be due quarterly according to the change of season, March 20, June 20, September 20 and December 20.

19. Wars and revenge is absolutely forbidden between the two kingdoms in the event of differences of opinion.

20. The two sides shall present their case to Holy Roman Emperor and his judgement should be accepted by both sides as final.

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Melik Abraham and Yüzbaşı Gabriyēl² to Archbishop Argutinskii
(13 January 1784)³

It is a long time that we have not received any letters from you... Our conditions are dire and we are anxiously awaiting the benevolence of Russia to reach us... We wanted to write to His Excellency, Paul Sergeevich Potemkin, the commander of the Russian forces, to inform him that we wish to be included among those who serve Russia, but having no contact with him we ask you as our pastor to pass on our request...

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Step'an Ter-Sahakean to General Potemkin
(15 January 1784)⁴

At present the Persians are fortifying their districts and are gathering many troops. The reason for this are letters from the Turks who warn the Persians that the Russo-Georgian agreement puts them in danger... The

¹The entire social services of the state were to be handled by the Church, as they were in all Muslim countries.

²Melik Abraham Aghamalean was the secular chief of the Armenians of Erivan until 1804. Gabriyēl was a member of the Geghamean family and the chief of the Armenians of the Kırk-Bulagh *mahal*. Both left the region in 1804 with Tsitsianov and became Russian subjects.

³*TsGADA*, Coll. 23, group 1, file 13 (pt. 7), f. 61.

⁴*TsGADA*, Coll. 23, group 1, file 13 (pt. 7), f. 227.

Turks have also ordered their co-religionists in Ajaria to attack Imeret'i...The khan of Erevan is not the same man he was last year. He is doing everything in his power to bring the province into the Turkish sphere...¹I await news from my messenger to the other khans of the region.

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General Potemkin to Prince Potemkin(January 1784)²

1. Once Karabagh and Karadagh are independent what form of government should be placed there?
2. The population of Erevan is primarily composed of Armenians. The province also houses the Holy See of the Armenians and its Supreme Patriarch. The province is subject to King Erekle. After taking over Erevan, should we hand it to Erekle, who will undoubtedly demand it?
3. Ebrāhīm Khan of Shushi and Fath 'Alī Khan of Derbent should be treated well for the moment. Where do we exile them to, if we succeed in capturing one or both of them? What to we do if the population complains?
4. Will it be useful to give some of the local Armenian leaders military ranks in our army?
5. How much can we interfere in the affairs of Georgia and instruct its King?
6. I request that a complete plan of action be formed...
7. The Kuban region should be reinforced and a new fort should be constructed to strengthen the [Caucasian] Line.
8. I suggest that we charge a tariff at Mozdok to encourage its population to move to Ekaterinograd, which is located in a safer zone. We

¹Ġolām 'Alī Khan of Erevan was soon killed (1784) by one of his subordinates who opposed his pro-Turkish attitude. The new khan, Moḥammad, was more willing to listen to overtures from Russia. On 30 January Argutinskii wrote to General Potemkin informing him that the pasha of Erzerum had sent an Armenian to Ējmiatsin to find out about the Russian plans. He added that the kat'oghikos had responded that he had no contact with Russia, *TsGADA*, Coll. 23, group 1, file 13 (pt. 11), f. 195.

²*TsGADA*, Coll. 23, group 1, file 13 (pt. 8), ff. 417-418.

could give the merchants a six-year tax exemption to facilitate such a move...

11. King Solomon of Imeret'i has indicated his desire to become our subject and leave the Ottoman protection. Under what conditions should I accept him. The Treaty of Kaynarca¹ is not clear. The Ottomans wanted to take over Imeret'i, but Solomon threw them out. Is he independent from the Porte or not?
12. Finally, if our troops move beyond the Caucasus Mountains, the sum allocated for extraordinary expenses will not be sufficient.

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Melkom Popov to Ivan Tumanovskii
(5 March 1784)²

I was sent by Your Excellency to Isfahan to deliver your messages to the main Persian commander, 'Alī Murād Khan.³ I left Rasht on December 1st of last year and arrived in Qazvin on the 7th. I was kindly received by the commander of Qazvin, Moḥammad Zāher Khan. I left on the 17th and arrived in Kashan on the 25th of December. I presented myself to the governor, 'Abd ol-Rezā Khan, who also received me well. He provided me with an escort to Isfahan. The said escort waited there to guide me back.

I arrived in the capital city of Isfahan on January 1st of this year. I was housed in the home of Mīrzā Kālīl Khan, the minister of 'Alī Morād Khan. On January 6th I met 'Alī Morād Khan and presented him with your package. The khan ordered the reading of the letter and the proposed agreement...He ordered that I continue to reside at Mīrzā Kālīl's and be made comfortable. On the 12th of January an officer arrived from General Potemkin with a message for 'Alī Morād. The said officer was housed at the residence of Mīrzā Rabi', another minister of the khan. We were not permitted to see each other, but I was free to talk to the Georgian nobles in Isfahan.

¹The Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca between Russia and the Ottoman empire (1774).

²*TsGADA*, Coll. 23, group 1, file 13 (pt. 9), ff. 168-170.

³'Alī Morād Khan was the nephew of Karīm Khan Zand, who ruled parts of Persia after his death.

On February 7th 'Alī Morād Khan sent me a *kal'at*,¹ consisting of a caftan coat with a silken mantle,² a golden belt, a fine headgear and a dagger, usually given to Persian officers. He also gave me a horse and 100 rubles worth of gold coins. He ordered that all officials assist me in my return journey. I spent three days more in Isfahan and visited [New] Julfa. I learned the following, which I report herewith:

1. In attacking Shiraz, 'Alī Morād Khan used 40,000 troops. He went there to rescue the son of Karīm Khan, Abu'l-Faḥ Khan,³ who under house arrest on the orders of his uncle Šādeq Khan. 'Alī Morād told his troops that he intended to attack the city and rescue Abu'l Faḥ Khan. Meanwhile under the pretext that he needed funds for the army, he robbed the Armenian Monastery at Julfa and took twelve *batmans* in silver crosses and other utensils, promising to return the silver to them at a later date. After taking Shiraz he ordered the blinding of Šādeq Khan, as well as twenty-four of the Zand males, including Abu'l Faḥ Khan. He then ordered the senior khans of the city to the suburbs and beheaded some thirty of them during the night. He then took the *vakil*'s treasury and lived in Shiraz for a full year before returning to Isfahan.
2. They say he has a force of 12,000 *jazāyirčīs*,⁴ 5,000 cavalry, 2,500 Turkish mercenaries, and 300 Georgian princes and nobles. He does not rule like the *vakil*, but as a Shah. He sits on the throne and maintains a royal *divan*. Not everyone in Persia obeys him, however. The khans of Mazandaran and Astarabad, Khorasan, Mashhad and Azerbaijan do not follow his orders, although they feign obedience.
3. While in Isfahan I learned from Mīrzā Qalīl that Hedāyat Khan of Gilan had sent a courier to 'Alī Morād Khan asking him to send troops to resist the upcoming Russian invasion by land and sea. Sardār Aslān Khan, with 6,000 troops, was dispatched to Gilan.
4. The peasants and tribesmen under his jurisdiction have to pay 'Alī Morād Khan 50 kopeks for each cow, horse and mule; 10 kopeks for each sheep; and 20 kopeks for each goat. From every *batman* of grapes 10 kopeks, and 15 kopeks from every *batman* of grape juice.

¹An expensive robe of honor.

²Text has *dibovoi*, a variation of *diba*, a very rich fabric, sometimes moiré silk from Kashan.

³The eldest son of Karīm Khan Zand.

⁴Musketeers with large muskets.

Other fruit, such as oranges, apples, pears, are taxed 10 kopeks per tree. They are also required to perform labor.

5. The distance from Rasht to Isfahan is 100 miles, which equals 700 Russian *versts*. There are high mountains 30 miles south of Rasht. After that there are swamps and thickets. There is no other way to reach Isfahan. Bread sells for 40 kopeks a *batman*, beef is 50 kopeks a *batman*, lamb is 80 kopeks a *batman*, and chickens sell for 20 kopeks each. Butter costs three rubles a *batman*.
6. There is no evidence of restoration in Isfahan. As to Julfa, it used to have 12,000 houses. Rich Armenian merchants lived there in large buildings. At present there are only 300 households, who live in poverty. The palaces and gardens of the Shahs are in good condition and 'Alī Morād Khan resides in them. I returned to Enzeli on March 2nd in the company of Kostrov Bek.

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Captain Lialin¹ to Commander Khanykov²
(6 March 1784)³

On March 5th an Armenian merchant from Georgia arrived in Baku and declared that a messenger from the Turkish Sultan⁴ had arrived in Tiflis. The Sultan had admonished Erekle for abandoning his allegiance to Persia and putting himself under the protection of Russia. The Turks were not pleased with the arrival of Russian troops in Tiflis. The Sultan had ordered Erekle to dismiss the Russian troops or face an invasion by the Turks from Bayazid, Van, and Arpa-çay. He added that the Turks had a treaty with the Persians to aid each other against foreign invasions and that the Turks planned to exercise the conditions of that treaty.

He also reported that the Porte had sent an envoy to Ebrāhīm Khan of Shushi with the proposal that the Ottomans would pay 100 rubles to each Lesghian warrior living near Karabagh. However, since Ebrāhīm Khan is at war with the khan of Shakki, he refused the offer.⁵ The Turks sent

¹Captain Anisim Lialin was a naval officer on the Caspian Flotilla. He was in charge of the third frigate.

²Admiral P. I. Khanykov was the commander of the Caspian Flotilla.

³*TsGADA*, Coll. 23, group 1, file 13 (pt. 8), f. 21.

⁴Abdülhamit I (1774-1789).

⁵On 15 March General Potemkin informed Prince Potemkin that Ebrāhīm Khan wanted Russia to assure him that he would retain his rule over Karabagh

similar proposals to Fath 'Alī Khan of Derbent and the khan of Shemakhi. The two khans have declared war on Ebrāhīm Khan and have recruited 5,000 Lesghians.

A Turk who claims to be from Bukhara arrived here on the 6th and sought audience with the khan of Baku. The word is that he is not from Bukhara but an envoy from the Turkish Sultan. It is said that he plans to travel to Daghestan and Derbent...

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Hakob Antonean's Report to General Potemkin

(18 April 1784)¹

At Your Excellency's command I was dispatched to 'Alī Morād Khan of Isfahan.² I arrived in Georgia on October 26th and was a guest of King Erekle for thirteen days. I proceeded to Erevan and delivered a letter from King Erekle to the Armenian kat'oghikos. I then traveled safely to Khoi where I rested for five days. I continued my journey to Tabriz where I stayed for fifteen days. I then traveled to Kashan. The khan of Kashan heard of my arrival and ordered that I be brought before him. He asked me who I was and where did I come from. I responded that I was the envoy of His Excellency General Paul Sergeevich Potemkin, the holder of many medals and the commander of the Caucasian Line to 'Alī Morād Khan...I was given a horse and two escorts and I arrived in Isfahan on January 20th. I was escorted to the house of the vizier.

The vizier took my letters and gifts to 'Alī Morād Khan...The next day I was escorted by twelve horsemen to the palace of 'Alī Morād. I was provided with a horse covered with a silver cloth. There were 15,000

after he submission to Her Majesty, *TsGVIA*, Coll. 52, group 1/194, file 331 (pt. 3), f. 12. On 21 March, Ter-Sahakean informed General Potemkin that the khans of Karabagh, Baku, Khoi, and Shakki had made a pact to defend each other from outside attacks. He added that Ebrāhīm Khan had gathered a force of 12,000 Lesghians. A similar report was sent by Burnashev on 26 March, *TsGADA*, Coll. 23, group 1, file 13 (pt. 11), ff. 363, 371. On 6 April Prince Potemkin reported to Empress Catherine that although Ebrāhīm Khan was thinking of joining Russia, Potemkin was not in favor of that. The next ruler of Karabagh, as far as Potemkin was concerned, was to be an Armenian. Hence no new proposals were made to Ebrāhīm Khan.

¹*TsGADA*, Coll. 15, group 1, file 192, ff. 54-56.

²'Alī Morād Khan Zand, who ruled in Isfahan (1779-1785) after the death of Karīm Khan.

brave troops, armed with sabres and guns, who stood in rows of three and four along the way to the palace...

The khan asked his secretary to read the letters and open the gifts in the presence of the courtiers... 'Alī Morād Khan commented that his predecessors Shah 'Abbās and Ṭahmāsp Qolī Khan [Nāder] had friendly relations with Russia¹ and that he wished to continue the good relations... He added that he had no quarrel with Russia. Russian merchants could continue to trade freely in Persia... I was to be housed at the residence of the vizier. I was given superb robes worth 400 rubles... I was also given a horse and 200 rubles for my return journey to Georgia...

Hakob, son of Anton, an Armenian from Constantinople

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Prince Potemkin to General Potemkin

(22 April 1784)²

At the present you are to pay attention to the region stretching from the Sea of Azov to the Caspian Sea and have your troops in readiness. Keep peace at the borders. We have to get specific information on the strength and the people who reside across our borders. Are there any arguments among them? What kind of life do these Asiatics lead? What kind of provisions do they have? How can we avoid spreading panic among them and how can we bring them to our side? As to Armenia, Daghestan, and other Persian provinces you have to ascertain the amount of provisions they can provide and the conditions of the roads. You are to prepare a complete map of the region and present it to me with full details.³

¹Refers to the previous dynasties, the Safavids and the Afshars.

²*TsGADA*, Coll. 23, group 1, file 13 (pt 8), ff. 12-13.

³On 26 April General Potemkin wrote to Prince Potemkin that Archbishop Argutinskii is the one Armenian who was in touch with all his co-religionists and that his reports were extremely valuable and accurate, *TsGVIA*, Coll. 52, group 1/194, file 331 (pt. 4), f. 22. On 28 April Argutinskii wrote to Prince Potemkin stating that Kat'oghikos Ghukas is tired of the yoke of slavery. The Armenians do not have the resources to rebel against the infidel and await the arrival of the Russians, *TsGVIA*, Coll. 52, group 1/194, file 331 (pt. 5), f. 1.

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Prince Potemkin to Catherine the Great(April 1784)¹

General Potemkin reports that Ebrāhīm Khan of Shushi and Aḥmad Khan of Khoi, have sent letters to Erekle; the former, via Mīrzā Vālī, the latter, via Imam Qolī Bek. Ebrāhīm Khan behavior is erratic. On one hand he declares his devotion to Your Majesty, his willingness to come under the protection of Russia, and his benevolence toward the Armenians, while on the other hand he continues to persecute the Armenian population of Karabagh and Karadagh. In his letters to King Erekle, which were delivered by Mīrzā Vālī, he has asked for two conditions: 1. That he is to continue to rule over the khanate. 2. No one interfere with his domestic policies. This means that he wishes to continue his harassment of the Armenians. Mīrzā Vālī was told if Ebrāhīm is seriously considering Russian protection he should send an embassy.

Our confidential agent in Erevan reports that the Armenians of that province are awaiting the arrival of Russian troops and are prepared to join them on the spot. The Armenian kat'oghikos and the meliks have promised full cooperation and aid.

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Kat'oghikos Hovhannēs to General Potemkin(10 May 1784)²

We received your letter via Gabriyēl and are overjoyed that you have not forgotten us. We have experienced great misery. Ebrāhīm Khan has somehow found out about our correspondence with Your Excellency and has retaliated terribly. Many managed to escape but Melik Abov and Melik Mejlum³ were arrested and were tortured. Both were released after some time and instructed me to inform you of their misfortunes. We have put our fate in the hands of Her Majesty, Our Mother...

Second lieutenant Melikov wrote to us from Tiflis to send him a trusted man to deliver Your Excellency's message. We dispatched

¹AVPR, Russia's Relations with Persia, group 77/6 (1784), file 469, ff. 3-4.

²TsGADA, Coll. 23, group 1, file 13 (pt. 8), f. 179.

³Abov, the son of Melik Hovsēp', was a member of the Beglarean clan, the hereditary rulers of Gulistan. Melik Mejlum was a member of the Israyēlean clan, the hereditary rulers of Jraberd.

Mahdesi¹Grigor and Daniël. On their return journey they encountered bandits, were delayed, and suffered imprisonment. Your messages, therefore, were not delivered until later.

We have suffered for a long time under the yoke of the Muslims and invasions by the Lesghians. We are prepared to fight. Please save us from their clutches. We put our trust in God and in Her Majesty, Catherine Alekseevna.

We know that Russia has concluded a firm peace with the Ottomans. We feel that this may weaken your resolve to carry out your plans here. We are prepared to die for our cause and our religion. Please inform us via Daniël of your intentions. Shall we await your troops or shall we find another way to save ourselves?

Kat'oghikos Hovhannēs, Bishop Israyēl, Bishop Eghiazar, Bishop Sahak, Bishop Hakob, Bishop Hohannēs, Bishop Grigor, Mikayēl Barunpapean, Israyēl Melikbekean, Melikbek Jalalean of Khachen, Melik Abov Hovsēp'ean, and Melik Mejlum Aghamean.²

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Colonel Burnashev to General Potemkin

(26 May 1784)³

Ilia, the son of the former leader of the Assyrian people, who are currently living in the land of the khan of Urumiye, is seeking to save his people from the yoke of the Muslims. He has asked Erekle to forward his petition to me. He requests that Her Majesty, Empress Catherine, put his people under Her protection. There are 100 villages inhabited by Assyrians in the domain of the khan of Urumiye. In addition, some 20,000 families reside within the borders of Turkey. They are led by a bishop and also request that Russia save them from the Turks.

¹From the Arabic *Maqdasi*, someone who has made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem.

²A similar letter was sent on 29 May 1784, *TsGADA*, Coll. 23, group 1, file 13 (pt. 8), f. 178.

³*TsGADA*, Coll. 23, group 1, file 13 (pt. 8), f. 93.

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*Consul Tumanovskii to Governor Zhukov*¹(28 May 1784)²

On 8 April, our administrator, Latyntsov, received a letter from the Armenian merchant, Kalustov. The note states that a French envoy has arrived in Isfahan. He has been there for almost a month but has not seen 'Alī Morād Khan yet. No one knows the purpose of his mission, but Kalustov will inform us the moment he learns of it.

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Armenians of Erevan to Archbishop Argutinskii(30 May 1784)³

We received Your Eminence's letter and following your advice we have sent petitions to Her Majesty's Court, to His Excellency Prince Grigorii Potemkin, and to Paul Potemkin.⁴ We have stated that we do not wish to continue to be slaves and are daily awaiting the might and the loud guns of the Russian army to quench the thirst in our souls. We pray that Your Eminence will not forget us.

Melik Abraham, son of Melik Ohannēs

Yüzbaşı Gabriyēl, son of Yüzbaşı Alahvērdis

Step'an, son of Ter-Sahak

Israyēl, son of Aghabab, Meliksēt' and brother of the late Kat'oghikos Simēon

Ovanēs, son of Mahdesi Ohan

Abov, son of Virap

Mahdesi Ovakim, son of Mahdesi Markar

Ovanes T'asalean

Voskan, son of Harut'iwn

¹M. M. Zhukov was the governor of Astrakhan.

²*TsGADA*, Coll. 23, group 1, file 13 (pt. 9), f. 165.

³*Ibid.*, f. 161.

⁴The letter to General Potemkin is in *TsGADA*, Coll. 23, group 1, file 13 (pt. 8), f. 166.

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Alexander Bezhborodko¹ to Peter Bakunin²(31 May 1784)³

I have received a letter from Prince Grigorii Aleksandrovich Potemkin in which he states that the present viceroy of Persia, 'Alī Morād Khan, is prepared to meet all our conditions if we recognize him as Shah.

Prince Potemkin feels that this would be the best way to conclude our Persian affairs. Upon concluding a treaty with 'Alī Morād Khan, we shall be in control of all the lands of King Erekle, as well as all the autonomous regions of Armenia and the Caspian littoral. In addition we shall greatly benefit from the excellent trading conditions with the Persian Empire. Potemkin also thinks that 'Alī Morād Khan is willing to conclude a defensive, and maybe even an offensive, alliance against the Porte...

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Daniel Avanesov to General Potemkin(7 June 1784)⁴

The meliks of Karabagh have informed me that Ebrāhīm Khan, having learned of their correspondence with Your Excellency, is planning to destroy all of them.

The Turkish Court has sent envoys to all the Persian khans to gather their forces and to meet at the confluence of the Kura River. The Turks do not wish the Persians to fall under Russian rule. They want to conclude a treaty with the Persian Court. Turkish forces will then come to the aid of the regions of Derbent, the Caspian littoral and other Persian cities in the interior. The Turks are concerned about the presence of Russian troops in Georgia and their imminent attack on Derbent. The meliks fear that if the Persians and Turks unite, the Armenian race cannot be

¹Alexander Andreevich Bezhborodko (1747-1799) was the head of the Collegium of Foreign Affairs.

²Peter Bakunin was a member of the Collegium of Foreign Affairs.

³AKVB, XIII, pp. 53-54.

⁴TsGADA, Coll. 23, group 1, file 13 (pt. 8), ff. 124-125. A similar letter was sent by Archbishop Argutinskii to Prince Potemkin on 10 September, TsGADA, Coll. 15, group 1, file 149, f. 194.

easily saved. They add that although the Turks have a peace treaty with Russia, it will not last long.

The meliks ask that Your Excellency send one of the two regiments in Georgia to Ganja. Such an act will stop Ebrāhīm Khan from attacking the Armenians... The meliks state that they have 5,000 brave armed men, both cavalry and infantry, in readiness to join the Russian forces the moment they arrive in Ganja. They are also prepared to send their fighters to the Kura to meet your army coming from Derbent. If the Turks take Erevan, then all the khans of Azerbaijan will join them, and they will attack Georgia...

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King Erekle to General Potemkin(13 August 1784)¹

On the 8th of this month, Deacon Stepan, a messenger from the Armenian Patriarch Luke [Ghukas] arrived here. He is carrying letters for Your Excellency. I have provided him with the necessary escort and ask that Your Excellency show kindness to the said Stepan. Erekle, King of K'art'li and Kakhet'i.²

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Archbishop Argutinskii to Step'an Ter-Sahakean(Early October 1784)³

I have written letters of introduction for you addressed to Prince Potemkin and many others but have not received any letters from you. Our Esayi has written that he has heard that you have gone to St. Petersburg. Esayi and I are sad that you did not meet each other. Seek the aid of the Lazarevs and the Georgian envoy, Garsevan Tchavtchavadze. You can then use their contacts to write to the Empress. Last year, the two men were very ready to help our people. I prepared some material for them and I am sending you a copy so that you can present it to Tchavtchavadze. I have written to my friends to greet you well... See us upon your

¹*TsGADA*, Coll. 23, group 1, file 13 (pt. 8), f. 296.

²The letter from Ghukas to Potemkin was dated 1 August. In it Ghukas asked Russia to save the people of Haik from tyranny, *TsGVIA*, Coll. 52, group 1/194, file 331 (pt. 8), ff. 70-71.

³*MAAC*, MS. no 4496, f. 229.

return here or in Kizliar. I have written to the kat'oghikos to write introductions for you to meet the right people. Tell me how the men who went from Shushi to Russia are doing...Also inform me weekly about what is going on in the capital. Give it to Manuchar who will send it to me. I have repeatedly asked the kat'oghikos to petition the Empress, the Potemkin brothers, and Agha Hovhannēs (Lazarev), but he does not listen and causes major problems for me...The ka'toghikos now claims that he has not received my letters. Tell all this to Agha Hovhannēs who is close to the Empress.

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Archbishop Argutinskii to Hovhannēs Lazarev
(18 October 1784)¹

After your return to Moscow I have not received a letter from you. I have heard from other friends that at the end of last month you were leaving Moscow. May God keep you and your family healthy! In my previous letters I have briefly told you how I am. I have shown Agha Grigor the letters of the kat'oghikos. Ask General Paul Potemkin (not the kat'oghikos) how many times have I sent letters and verbally presented our problems. Agha Hovhannēs must be seriously involved, so that our people's petitions can be properly translated and presented to the Russian Court...Our problems have lost their importance to the Russians. General Paul Potemkin now gives one answer to ten of my letters. Our nation is abandoned and I have lost two years of my life. The Russians have given every group something, but we have received nothing. Paul Potemkin has written to Prince Grigorii Potemkin praising my services to Russia. No answer has been received. I have no protector in St. Petersburg; otherwise my efforts would have been rewarded. What I have accomplished here [New Nakhichevan and Astrakhan] for the Empress in two years, could not have been done by ten Russian generals. Paul Potemkin tells me that the Empress is aware of all my labors, but I have not seen any results. Please tell Prince Potemkin that I need him and shall always need him. Tell Tchavtchavadze of our friendship. I have three requests:

1. Please receive Step'an Ter-Sahakean, who is from Erevan, kindly and be kind to him. We have sent him and we do not know what will happen.

¹MAAC, MS. no. 4496, ff. 232-233.

2. There are many Armenians in Moldavia. They are in Serchov and its surrounding villages. There are also two monasteries there. The citizens have requested a bishop from the kat'oghikos. Prior to this they were under the jurisdiction of the bishop of the Crimea. I am not the bishop of Crimea. The kat'oghikos has sent Vardapet Step'an of Julfa as his legate and their prelate. He was not permitted to enter. He has been told that without Emperor Joseph's (II) permission, no Armenian or Greek clergyman can enter this Austrian region. The people are left without a spiritual leader and have written a tearful letter to the kat'oghikos to resolve their problem. The kat'oghikos has written to me to find a way to send a bishop there. I beg you to talk to the Russian envoy to Austria whom you know so that we can write a petition to Joseph and send it to him via his envoy. We may be able to receive permission to send a bishop. Do you think that the kat'oghikos or the Empress should write to Joseph? 3. I have been away from the Holy See for ten years and would like to see the new kat'oghikos [Ghukas]. This is very important for me. I cannot explain anything to them [the Holy See] in writing. My life is fading away every day, while my obligations¹ to the Holy See increases daily. Please arrange a travel permit for me to go to Ējmiatsin. I have written to Prince Potemkin about the permit and I now ask you to arrange a six months' leave for me to go to the Holy See and return. Please let him send the letter to Paul Potemkin.

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Archbishop Argutinskii to Step'an Ter-Sahakean
(24 October 1784)²

Yesterday I received your letter dated September 30th. I learned that you have arrived safely and was happy. I have already dispatched your letter to the kat'oghikos. The ruler [Erekle?] has given the khanate of Erevan to Khurda Khanum's son. The vizier of Erevan is the sultan of Maku. The country is now very peaceful. I hope you have met the Procurator General. Remember that you are not only an envoy from Erevan but you represent the entire Armenian nation, as well as the meliks of Karabagh. The time has come for our people to rise or to collapse. So tighten your belt and with a brave countenance keep aside anything that may hamper your mission. If you succeed, your name and that of your family will re-

¹The text has *menat*, from the Arabo-Persian *mennat*.

²MAAC, MS. no. 4496, f. 238.

main forever. If you fail, you shall be an ordinary poor man of our nation. For many years I have written letters and spoken words, but no one save God has helped me. Half of my life has been wasted on numerous problems. I have not even been able to see my relatives in Georgia. Inform me immediately of anything significant that occurs in St. Petersburg. I have asked Agha Hovhannēs to receive you as a special person and not an ordinary man. Your message shall find its target due to his name and you shall return soon. Our Esayi has not returned yet, when he does I shall tell him about you.

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Step'an Ter-Sahakean to Prince Potemkin

(18 December 1784)¹

I have received a letter from Archbishop Argutinskii dated November 3rd. He writes that 'Alī Morād Khan of Isfahan accompanied by a large army is at present in Sovug-Bulagh, that is, between Hamadan and Tabriz. He has dispatched his two sons, one to the khan of Astarabad, Āğā Moḥammad and the other, with a force of 12,000 to Shiraz to punish 'Alī Khan. Mazandaran and Gilan have been conquered and Āğā Moḥammad Khan has been forced to take refuge with the Turkmen. 'Alī Morād Khan plans to winter in the Moghan Steppe and be crowned in Ardebil.

As to Armenia, the Lesghians have raided the fortress of Melik Abov in Gulistan. A large number of Christians have been taken as prisoners. I inform Your Excellency that our people have suffered a great deal at the hands of these beasts. I have been told by the Armenians of India and Constantinople that they are impatiently waiting to come under the scepter of Her Majesty, the humane Mother of Great Russia. The nine million Armenians around the world are all prepared to come under Russian rule...

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Colonel Burnashev to General Potemkin

(23 December 1784)²

Prince Argutov, His Excellency's [Prince Potemkin's] envoy to Ebrāhīm Khan returned from Shushi on December 20th. He reports that Ebrāhīm

¹*TsGVIA*, Coll. 52, group 1/194, file 331 (pt. 9), f. 98.

²*TsGVIA*, Coll. 52, group 1/194, file 350 (pt. 2), f. 5.

Khan has received a fur coat, a clock, and 7,000 gold pieces from the Porte.¹ Fath 'Alī Khan of Derbent received the same gifts. The khan of Khoi received a fur coat, a clock, and more money. The khan of Erevan was given gifts as well, but he refused to accept them. The khans of Tabriz and Karadagh received gifts as well. Nazar 'Alī Khan of Nakhichevan, the khans of Shemakhi, Urumiye, and Nukha, together with Uma Khan, the Shamkhal of Utsmi, received undetermined amount of cash. They were all invited to join together against any Russian incursion into the region. The Turkish note especially warns against the fall of Erevan to the Russians. Ebrāhīm Khan, at the suggestion of Tala Hasan Khan, is prepared to meet with Fath 'Alī Khan near the Kura River to end their enmity. If they succeed, Ebrāhīm Khan shall move his forces into Ganja. If not, Ebrāhīm Khan wishes that His Excellency helped him against Fath 'Alī Khan.

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*Archbishop Argutinskii to Kat'oghikos Hovhannēs
and the Meliks of Karabagh
(5 February 1785)²*

Please be aware that whatever has to happen will occur this year, because the Russian commander has been called to St. Petersburg. Step'an Ter-Sahakean is in Petersburg. I have told him to explain your situation to the Russians so that your efforts are not wasted. Please write to him and the procurator as soon as possible. Also send letters to General Paul Potemkin and me. Mail them to Ter Ghazar in Tiflis and ask him to forward them to me. This is my last warning—Please do not let me lose face. The Russians are treating Step'an well and are giving him hope. Also write to Agha Hovhannēs explaining you know how much he has done for all of us and using moving words beg him to help you explain your difficulties to the Russian court.

¹On 15 July 1785, Argutinskii wrote to General Potemkin that Ebrāhīm Khan was prepared to serve the Turks. He had summoned the Armenian meliks and had told them that he had forgiven their contacts with Russia. The meliks had responded that would serve the khan but not the Turks, *AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Armenia, group 100/3 (1797-1799), file 464, f. 171.

²*MAAC*, MS. no. 2699, f. 19.

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Archbishop Argutinskii to Prince Potemkin
(18 April 1785)¹

I regret to inform Your Excellency that I have not received a letter from Your Excellency for some time. I wish Your Excellency health and am awaiting Your Excellency's arrival. I do not doubt that my letter given to Dr. Reineggs has reached Your Excellency. I hope that Your Excellency can take care of those matters. Since the day I met Your Excellency I became your devoted servant. If for some reason Your Excellency has not received my letter, I beg that you look for it. I congratulate Your Excellency on your recent marriage and pray that God give you a long and happy life and to see your offspring. Step'an from Erevan has written that you received him well and gave him hope. He and I both thank you. He accomplished his task with ease thanks to Your Excellency's order. I am sure you have heard the news about Persia. Mr. Tamarov went to Khoi, head of 'Alī Morād Khan death and has returned. We have news from Tiflis that Prince Yulon and General David Orbelian have surrounded the fort of Ganja and will soon take it. They have received no help from anyone and ask that once they take over Ganja, they should be permitted to keep it and pay tribute to the Persian Shah. Erevan is calm.

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Catherine the Great to Prince Potemkin
(9 May 1785)²

Those Armenians who have accepted the Catholic faith and all other unbelievers are to be treated according to Our previous statute, under section K where you shall find their consistorial regulations. As to the Armenians who are not members of the Latin Church, they have their own religious hierarchy and religious court. They should be in charge of their own affairs for the moment. We shall inform you of any changes via the Senate and the Third Department.³

¹MAAC, MS. no. 4496, f. 292.

²PSZR, XXII, no. 16194.

³The above is number 16 in a group of orders sent by Catherine to Potemkin. On 18 March 1786 Catherine decreed that Armenians could be elected as assessors and members of the jury in the town council and court of Astrakhan, PSZR, XXII, no. 16356. On 19 August 1786, the Senate ordered that the Armenian

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Archbishop Argutinskii to Shahamir Shahamirean(10 September 1785)¹

I have written to you via the priest Harut'iwun from New Nakhichevan. I hope that he has reached you and that you are aware of what is happening here...First of all, New Nakhichevan is growing daily. 2.In the same year that I wrote to you the Russians took over all of the Crimea and its adjoining lands. Their khans are now ruling there for Russia. 3.The king of Georgia Erekle made an alliance with Russia. The Empress sent him a bejeweled crown, a globe a scepter, a royal purple robe, a sword, and a royal tent with insignias. Two Russian battalions were also sent to protect the Georgians forever. Erekle has sent his two eldest sons to Russia. One is the Kat'olikos Anton,²who is studying Russian and the other is Mirian, who is studying military techniques and has joined the Russian military with the rank of colonel. The pasha of Akhaltsikhe and the Lesghians have attacked Erekle. He has, with the help of God, defeated them many times...The Russians have given him medals and honors for his efforts. This is just the beginning; soon there will be more victories. 4.Our poor nation's problems have been left unresolved. Artsakh's big meliks are all gone and the present ones are youngsters who are afraid. Kat'oghikos Hovhannēs has united them. Melik Adam's and Melik Hovsēp's sons, Melik Bakhtam of Dizak, and even Melik Shahnazar have joined forces. They have written to Empress Catherine and to Prince Potemkin and General Potemkin, as well as the humble me. Nothing has been accomplished so far except many words and great discussions. I still have hope; we need to be patient.

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Archbishop Argutinskii to Shahamir Shahamirean(3 September 1786)³

With great joy, I received your long letter from Moscow today, which was filled with sweet words and your great voice. I thanked God for your

consistory at Astrakhan was to be under the jurisdiction of the Armenian Church, PZSR, XXII, no. 16427.

¹MAAC, MS. no. 2699, ff. 42-43.

²Anton Erekle-dze Batonishvili or Antoni II (1788-1811).

³MAAC, MS. no 2699, ff. 101a-106a.

and your family's health...On 1 January and 10 June I sent you letters explaining all that has occurred here. You shall learn about the Armenian and Aghuank' and other things which you may not know...As I wrote on 24 April 1783, Russia, in response to the many letters from the kat'oghikoses and the meliks, wishes to liberate Armenia. Kat'oghikos Hovhannēs and the meliks, due to our labors, have taken an oath and have joined together. They plan with all their might to do what the Russians propose. The meliks' envoy, Gabriyēl, brought their letters to Empress Catherine, Prince Potemkin, General Potemkin, others, and me. Their letters, as well as my own, reached the Empress. Secret letters were also sent by Step'an Ter-Sahakean to Her Majesty. He has stayed in Russia for two years. They have kept him and have given him hope. We do not know what will be the outcome.

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Archbishop Argutinskii to Ambassador Bulgakov(25 October 1786)¹

I am writing on behalf of the Araratian Kat'oghikos of All Armenians. With Prince Potemkin's permission, the Armenian Church, at the request of the Armenians of Constantinople, printed a number of books at St. Petersburg. The books were to be sold in Constantinople. No one was permitted to purchase these books, however, and they were burned. I ask Your Excellency to find out the reason for this from the Armenian Patriarch of Constantinople, Zak'aria. I suggest that you sent a trusted subordinate to the Patriarch of Constantinople and make inquiries on behalf of the Russian State. Why do books, which are printed by the Armenian printing press in Venice and are against our religious doctrines are being sold openly in Constantinople, while books, which are printed in Russia and represent the true Armenian faith, cannot reach the people?...

P.S. As a sign of friendship and gratitude I am sending you six silk handkerchiefs in red color made in the Astrakhan factory² and two prayer books by Nersēs the Armenian³ which have been translated from Armenian into Russian and printed in St. Petersburg.

¹AVPR, Russian Mission at Constantinople (1782-1786), file 912, ff. 10-11.

²The factory was owned by Armenians, see document 189.

³Probably Nersēs Shnorhali (1166-1173).

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King Erekle to General Potemkin(2 November 1786)¹

Circumstances in our kingdom demand that we keep Your Excellency abreast of everything that occurs here. You are aware that Ebrāhīm Khan has always followed my advice. The moment I put myself under the protection of Russia, I told him to send an envoy to Her Majesty's court to seek a similar protection. Ebrāhīm Khan first dispatched Molla Vālī and later, Mūsā Solṭān to Her Majesty.

During the visit of Doctor Reineggs, who had come here from the court of Her Majesty, a number of Armenians from the five districts [of Karabagh] arrived here and presented him with letters from the meliks. I was not aware of the contents of those letters and was not party to their discussions. Soon after, however, Ebrāhīm Khan found out about their correspondence. He deposed Melik Abov and became suspicious of me and of the Russian State. From then on he began his contacts with the Ottomans, specifically with Patal Pasha of Erzerum and Suleiman Pasha of Akhaltsikhe.² The Turkish Sultan sent him medals and gifts and Ebrāhīm Khan has become our enemy. He is trying to turn Ganja and Erevan against me and has sent messages to the Tatar nomads to break their friendship with us. He has thus forced me to react against his actions.

It would be beneficial if you could separate Fath 'Alī Khan of Kuba from Ebrāhīm Khan and make him an ally of Russia. I have already dispatched an envoy to Fath 'Alī Khan to join me in an alliance. I ask that Your Excellency send letters to Fath 'Alī Khan asking him to break his contact with Ebrāhīm Khan. We hope that he will take your advice... The khan of Nukha is a great enemy of Ebrāhīm Khan. Although Fath 'Alī Khan and the khan of Nukha do not get along, I am making every effort to reconcile the two and unite them against Ebrāhīm Khan of Shushi... I

¹*TsGVIA*, Coll. 52, group 1/194, file 481, f. 87.

²On 25 February 1787, Colonel Burnashev informed General Potemkin that a letter written by Ebrāhīm Khan to the Ottoman Sultan was found in Akhaltsikhe. The said letter was translated and attached to the report. The letter expressed Ebrāhīm Khan's devotion to the Sultan and stated that his envoy, Molla Hasan, will personally relate Ebrāhīm's message, *TsGVIA*, Coll. 52, group 1/194, file 416 (pt. 1), f. 102.

ask that Your Excellency act the moment you receive this letter which is carried by Stefan, a merchant from Tiflis.

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Major Koch¹ to General Apraksin

(19 November 1786)²

Kaspar Karapetov, an Armenian merchant from [New] Nakhichevan, arrived at the Fort of Ekaterinoslav. During his travels for business in the Kuban region he purchased the following Russian prisoners held by the Tatars...[fifteen soldiers and one musician]. He paid 250 rubles for each officer and 200 rubles for each Cossack. The musician convinced the Armenian that he was an officer and was purchased for 250 rubles. He was promised that they would repay him the original sum plus 50 rubles each...³They have all been quarantined and I have ordered that the provisions be given to them and be charged to their respective corps...Upon the termination of their quarantine the Armenian and the ransomed men will be permitted to leave...

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Archbishop Argutinskii to Shahamir Shahamirean

(3 January 1787)⁴

Despite all my efforts, our kat'oghikos has not written to Empress Catherine because he is afraid of the Turks and Persians. Only the meliks have written secret letters so that they would not be victims of the wrath of the Muslims, who are the same wild beasts as ever. We have asked Agha Hovhannēs to act as the spokesmen for the Armenians to Her Majesty. He knows your writings and ideas...

¹Major F. Kokh (Koch) was the commandant of the Ekaterinoslav Fort.

²*TsGADA*, Coll. 23, group 1, file 13 (pt. 15), f. 193.

³A decree dated 19 December 1774 permitted the purchase of Russian prisoners who had been captured by Tatars during the rebellion of Pugachev. The said prisoners were to work for the person who had purchased them until their debt was fully paid, *Butkov*, III, 137.

⁴*MAAC*, MS. no 2699, ff. 129-133.

I sent them a translation of the proposed treaty between Russia and Armenia.¹ They have responded that treaties are signed between kings. Who is your king?

They also added that our kat'oghikos is keeping away from the Russians. The khan of Shushi has taken the son of Melik Hovsēp' to his fort and has imprisoned him. He has also frightened Kat'oghikos Hovhannēs. The Armenians of Karabagh are now silent and are not writing any more.

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Prince David to Count Osterman(25 January 1787)²

I wish to enter the service of Her Majesty and am sending the request to Your Excellency for your kind consideration.

David Bagration

First-born son of the heir to the throne, Prince Giorgi.³

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Colonel Burnashev to General Potemkin(8 July 1787)⁴

The son of Melik Bakhtam from the *seghnaghs* arrived this month with the news that the Kat'oghikos of Gandzasar and all the Armenian meliks had been arrested by Ebrāhīm Khan. After terrible tortures, the meliks had surrendered the letters written by Your Excellency. The kat'oghikos had died from the ordeal and his church had been looted.

Ebrāhīm Khan had taken 15,000 rubles from the meliks before releasing them. They have secretly written to King Erekle that they were all prepared to fight Ebrāhīm Khan the moment Her Majesty's army appeared in Karabagh....

¹See document 357.

²*Gramoty*, II (pt. 2), 62.

³He served as an officer in Russia. Later he returned to Georgia and following the death of his father became Prince-Regent until 1801. After the annexation of Georgia, Tsitsianov sent him under military guard to Russia in 1803.

⁴*TsGVIA*, Coll. 52, group 1.194, file 416 (pt. 1), f. 353.

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Colonel Burnashev to General Potemkin(3 August 1787)¹

On the 26th of July I received news that Aḥmad Āqā, the Kazakh and his nomad friends had entered into Karabagh with 1,500 families. They had forced some 700 Armenian families out of their lands. I asked Prince Yulon² and his Georgian troops to attack them.

Yesterday I heard that the Kazakhs after fleeing Karabagh had joined the Muslims of Shamshedil and Ĵavād Khan of Ganja. They have made several attacks on the Armenians and had taken hostages. Most of Yulon's Georgian troops are volunteers and have abandoned the fighting. He has only 150 men left.

I suggest that Your Excellency permit me to dispatch one of our battalions stationed in Tiflis to aid Yulon and to stop the taking of Armenians...³

¹*TsGVIA*, Coll. 52, group I.194, file 416 (pt. 11), f. 31.

²Yulon was the eldest son of King Erekle and Queen Darejan. He did not succeed his father. He was against the Russian annexation of Georgia in 1801, and was finally exiled to Russia in 1805.

³On 14 September Burnashev reported that the Shamshedil nomads, fearing his troops, had all (3,200 households) ran to Ganja. He added that Uma Khan of Avaria had gathered his troops and was on his way to fight the Russo-Georgian forces. Most of the other khans and the various tribes had submitted, however. Furthermore, some 2,500 Armenian households under the leadership of Melik Misail had taken refuge in Ganja and had asked to be relocated to Georgia. Melik Abov and Melik Mejlum had taken refuge in their forts and had asked Erekle to permit them to settle in Georgia as well. Finally Ĵavād Khan of Ganja had submitted to Erekle, had agreed to pay 3,000 rubles in annual tribute, and had sent his brother as a hostage, *TsGVIA*, Coll. 52, group I/194, file 416 (pt. 2), ff. 100-102. On September 26 Burnashev reported that Yulon and 2,000 troops had gone to aid the Armenian meliks to relocate to Georgia. On the way he had met Ebrāhīm Khan, who was accompanied with 1,500 men. A battle ensued in which the Georgians defeated the Muslims and took 500 men captive. The presence of Ebrāhīm Khan, however, scared the Armenians and except for the meliks and some of their family members the rest stayed behind, *ibid.*, f. 107.

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Shahamir Shahamirean to Kat'oghikos Ghukas(15 October 1787)¹

I received your letters of 22 May 1785 and 5 February 1786. I kissed them and raised them to my head. Our family is happy that you are well... We have heard of your troubles and of the invasions by the Muslims and hope that all of that has passed. We hope that the enemy of Christ shall not attack you again... I thank you for taking time and informing us about Empress Catherine's letter to you as well as your letter to her. I am happy to know that there is such friendship between you and hope that it will benefit our people. Empress Catherine's relationship with Erekle demonstrates that our turn will come. Georgia is not larger than the combined area of all of the Armenian historic provinces. Obviously it is possible to have a treaty with Empress Catherine (as demonstrated by Georgia). We only need to find a civilian and military leader. Then we can also have a treaty. Erekle is, after all, a Bagratid [of Armenian background], if he could do it why can't we? Erekle has written to me and has asked for me to send him laws so that he can govern his country well. I have sent him the book called *The Snare of Glory*.² I have also sent a copy to you and one to Argutinskii.

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Archbishop Argutinskii to Prince Potemkin(7 January 1788)³

Your Excellency's benevolence toward the Armenian people and I encourages me to write this petition. The Armenian meliks, Abov and Meljum have declared their desire to serve the Russian State. Their loyalty to Russia brought the wrath of Ebrāhīm Khan of Shushi on them and they were forced to flee to Georgia. They have left their wives and all their belonging in Karabagh. The moment Russian forces arrive on the

¹MAAC, MS. no. 2949, ff. 276-281.

²See documents on the Armenians of India in the commentary.

³*Ibid.*, file 270, ff. 23-24.

scene the meliks, together with all other Christians in the region shall be ready to join them and bring peace to Ganja...¹

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Meliks Abov and Mejlum to Catherine the Great(29 January 1788)²

During the reign of Peter the Great our ancestors begged him to save the Armenians from the rule of the infidel. He was generous and with his troops came to free us and to expel the Muslims from our land. After reaching Derbent, God punished us for our sins and he returned to St. Petersburg. He promised to return but died soon after. All of this is written in your official records. We are still under the rule of the Muslims. When Your Majesty turned your favor to the Georgians, we were overjoyed and hope that your great kindness will touch us too. We have written to General Paul Potemkin, who has given us hope. He has told us of Your Majesty's greatness and that added we might one day serve you as well. We have sent many envoys to Potemkin hoping to be freed from slavery. Ebrāhīm Khan found out. He was planning to harm us but when he witnessed your alliance with Erekle he became afraid and did not bother us. Unfortunately, when he realized that Russia was not planning to extend her campaign into Armenia, he became bold and tried to destroy our people and us. He lied to us and invited us to the fort of Shushi. He planned to kill us. Erekle and his troops arrived in Ganja and this saved us. Ebrāhīm Khan was frightened and let us go. We escaped and came to our *seghnaghs*. We sent messages to Erekle asking him to permit our 12,000 households to migrate to Georgia. We wished to be under his and Your Majesty's protection. Erekle sent Prince Yulon, who escorted us. On the way he met Muslim troops. Yulon killed many Muslims; we also left our forts and killed as many Muslims as we could. We then prepared to leave. We then heard that Your Majesty's soldiers in Tiflis were planning to leave. We were forced to leave all our belongings and fighters and together with a few members of our families we came to the Georgian camp to stay there until our men could join us after four

¹A similar letter was sent by the two meliks to Prince Potemkin on 10 March 1788, *TsGVIA*, Coll. 52, group 1/194, file 270, f. 22. On 25 April Argutinskii informed Prince Potemkin that the meliks were anxiously waiting for Russia to resolve their dilemma, *ibid.*, f. 21.

²*TsGADA*, Coll. 15, group 1, file 197, f. 48.

days. The Georgians did not want to wait even an hour. We thus could not bring our troops, belongings, as well as some 70,000 Armenians. We could not return home and came to Tiflis.

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*King Erekle to General Tekelli*¹
(March 1788)²

According to the treaty [Georgievsk] between the Russian Empire and the Kingdom of Georgia, Russian border commanders are to protect Georgia against attacks by superior forces. Since Your Excellency is in charge of the Caucasian Line we address our comments to you.

The Ottoman Porte, witnessing our total devotion to Russia and fearing the loss of its influence in the region, has concentrated its efforts against us. It has sent money to Suleiman Pasha, the khans of Azerbaijan, Uma Khan of Avaria, and the Daghestanis to attack our subjects and us. The time has come, therefore, for me to ask the enforcement of the clause in the aforementioned treaty and ask for your direct assistance. Her Majesty's signature gave the Christians great hope and without Russian help they shall suffer greatly. Persia, Turkey, Daghestan, and the Caucasus surround Georgia. Georgia is the only force that binds the Christians together. If the Muslims succeed in destroying the Christians in this region, Russia will never gain access to it. Our situation is dire and any delay on Your Excellency's part may prove irreversible. If Your Excellency dispatches even a small force with artillery, the news of that shall frighten our enemies. Our loyal envoy, Senator Prince Sulkhan Tumanov³ shall verbally appraise you of the situation...

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Ivan Avramov to Prince Potemkin
(14 May 1788)⁴

Your Excellency's kindness toward me has emboldened me to write this petition.

¹General P. A. Tekelli was appointed the commander of the Caucasian Line.

²*Ibid.*, file 481, ff. 88-89.

³Sulkhan Tumanov and Sulkhan Betabekov were Armenians in the service of Erekle. They both had the title of *mdivanbek* (councilor).

⁴*TsGVIA*, Coll. 52, group 1/194, file 396, ff. 1-4.

From [1]779, that is from the beginning of my appointment as the head of the Armenian community of [New] Nakhichevan, I have striven to bring trade, have increased the livestock and the production of grain, and have built factories in that city and the five Armenian villages which surround it...I have now gathered a group of Armenian and a few Ukrainian volunteers and have, at my own expense, provided them with horses, uniforms, and weapons. They have been trained and are asking Your Excellency to confirm them to the ranks, which I have bestowed upon them and to permit them to serve in the Tauride Regiment...¹

The Armenian Volunteer Unit

<i>Rank</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Annual Salary in Rubles</i>	<i>Total</i>
Major	1	450	450
Captain	1	280	280
Lieutenant	2	190	380
Sub-Lieutenant	2	150	300
Sergeant	6	75	450
Non-Commis-			
sioned	4	60	240
Corporal	8	---	---
Private	200	50	10,400 ²
Total	224		12,500

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Prince Potemkin to Archbishop Argutinskii

(7 November 1789)³

All the Armenians, who reside in the new lands conquered by Russia [during the Russo-Turkish War], are to be under Your Eminence's pastoral jurisdiction. I am sure that you shall improve their poor living conditions, which resulted from the Turkish rule. I have ordered that one of the mosques in this area be converted to an Armenian church.⁴

¹They fought in the Russo-Turkish War of 1787-1792.

²The total should be 10,000.

³*SAAN*, III, 330-331.

⁴The letter was written from Bendery, a port on the right bank of the Dniestr River. The Genoese had built a fort there in the 12th century. The Turks took it

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Meliks of Karabagh to Prince Potemkin(23 January 1790)¹

Concealed in Karabagh, the remaining forces of the fallen Armenia Kingdom were awakened by the actions of His Majesty Peter the Great, who planned to conquer the Persian provinces by the Caspian littoral—that is Derbent, Baku, Shemakhi, and others.

The action of Peter the Great encouraged the meliks of Karabagh and their followers to seek the protection of Russia, to ask that Russia annex their region, and to rid them from the Tatars who had settled on their lands.

His Majesty, Peter the Great, bestowed his monarchial favor on the meliks, dispatched his envoys, and informed the meliks that he was prepared to annex their land. Among the envoys was Israel [Ori], who continued his mission by going to the court of Shah [Solṭān] Ḥosein in Isfahan. He was received with honor and upon return brought gifts from the Shah worth 200,000 rubles. In the meantime, some 17,000 Armenians armed themselves in Karabagh, Shemakhi, and other areas and waited for the arrival of the Russian troops. A force of 40,000 Russian troops under the leadership of Ori was to arrive in Karabagh.

Meanwhile, an Armenian called Navasart, who resided in Persia, kept His Majesty informed of the events taking place in Isfahan. He was to be decorated and rewarded for his services, but he died prematurely. Having

in the early 16th century. The Russians occupied it in 1770, 1789, and 1806. The Treaty of Bucharest (1812) made it part of Russia along with the rest of Bessarabia (present-day Moldova). On 3 November Major-General V. C. Popov wrote to Argutinskii, with an invitation from Potemkin, to come to Bendery, *SAAN*, III, 330. A few months earlier (18 July) Vice-Chancellor Bezborodko had written to A. A. Viazemskii, the Procurator-General reminding him that Armenians in the new territories had to be given special privileges, *ibid.*, 329. On 22 October 1790 Prince Potemkin wrote to General Gudovich that Archbishop Argutinskii had permission to travel to Kiliia, a town northwest of the port of Izmail. Izmail fell to the Russians in 1791, but was returned to Turkey by the Treaty of Jassy. It was retaken in 1809 and annexed to Russia by the Treaty of Bucharest, *ibid.*, 331.

¹*AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Armenia, group 100/3 (1797-1799), file 464, ff. 144-148; also in *SAAN*, II, 52-57. Archbishop Argutinskii forwarded the letter to Prince Potemkin. Although the general facts stated in the letter are accurate, the order of the events do not correspond to the actual dates.

no heirs, another Armenian, called Lazar took his place. Upon presenting himself to His Majesty he was given the rank of general and was offered the command of the 40,000 Russian troops to take Karabagh. Lazar felt he was not capable and declined. All this is known to the Collegium of Foreign Affairs. The meliks immediately asked the Georgian king, Shahnavaz¹ to send them a military commander. Davit' Bek was dispatched to Karabagh and after gathering 60,000 men he entrusted them to the command of Avan Khan.² Davit' and his group went to the Ghap'an Province and built fortifications in the town of Chvundur.

The preparations of Peter the Great and the actions of the Armenians of Karabagh disturbed the Pasha of Erzerum and he asked Davit' Bek the reason for the Armenian army. When Davit' Bek answered that he was obeying the Russian monarch, the Turks attacked and occupied all the regions from Erevan to Tabriz. The Afghans then conquered Isfahan, took over the Persian throne, and occupied the rest of the country.³

The meliks witnessing the Turkish attack and the situation in Persia immediately asked His Majesty to aid them. Peter the Great then ordered the Russian troops to enter Persia and occupy Derbent. The meliks joined the Georgian army near the Kura River under the command of King Wakhtang, the successor of Shahnavaz II. The Turks and the Afghans, fearing the Armeno-Georgian union, made peace and attacked. The Armenian meliks, following the escape of Wakhtang to Russia, asked His Majesty to permit them to migrate to the Caspian shores...Nāder Shah then threw the Turks out of Armenia and Georgia...The Armenian meliks, under the command of Avan Khan, attacked Saru Mustafa Pasha's forces in Ganja, defeated them, and forced the Pasha to escape to Erevan. Avan Khan and his family settled in Russia in 1733 and were given privileges by Her Majesty, Empress Anna. Nāder Shah after defeating the Turks granted special privileges to the Armenian meliks of Karabagh. Nāder designated Melik Agan [Egan] as the leader of the Armenians of Karabagh. The khan of Shushi killed his son Melik Esayi. His grandson was also killed and his goods confiscated. Ebrāhīm Khan of Shushi dealt with the following meliks: Melik Mejlum, son of Melik Adam, ruler of Jraberd; Melik Abov, son of Melik Hovsēp', ruler of Gulistan; Melik Shahnazar, son of Melik Husein, ruler of Varanda; Melik Alaverdi, son of Melik Mirzakhan, ruler of Khachen; and Melik

¹Should be Wakhtang VI, the nephew of Shahnavaz II.

²Avan Yüzbaşı.

³The meliks have confused the order of the events, see commentary.

Bakhtam, grandson of Melik Egan, ruler of Dizak. The above five districts constitute Karabagh.

The alliance between Melik Adam and Melik Hovsēp' made Melik Shahnazar jealous. He allied himself with Panāh Khan of the Jāvānšīr tribe and gave him the fortress of Shushi. They made war on Meliks Adam and Hovsēp'. The latter fought bravely but were eventually forced to take refuge with King T'eimuraz, the father of King Erekle. The khan of Ganja arranged a truce between Panāh Khan and the meliks after they agreed to pay tribute. His successor, Ebrāhīm Khan, however, broke the agreement, seized Melik Esayi, killed him, and put Melik Bakhtam in his place.

The commander-in-chief of the Caucasian Line, General Paul Sergeevich Potemkin, wrote to the meliks of Karabagh that Russia was prepared to free them from the yoke of the Tatars. He added that they should be ready. The meliks informed Her Majesty, General Potemkin, as well as the Armenian archbishop [Argutinskii] that they were prepared to act.

The successors of Melik Adam and Melik Hovsēp', Mejlum and Abov invited Melik Bakhtam of Dizak and visited Kat'oghikos Hovhannēs at Gandzasar. There, together with the rest of the Armenian secular and religious leaders they swore their loyalty to Russia upon the cross and the New Testament... The khan of Shushi learning of General Potemkin's letters and realizing that Russia was not prepared to help the meliks, arrested Melik Abov and confiscated his belongings. General Potemkin asked Ebrāhīm to free Melik Abov. Although free, the meliks were under guard and when the Georgian forces arrived in Ganja, meliks Mejlum and Abov escaped and sought the protection of Erekle. They planned to evacuate their people but Colonel Burnashev was told to take the Russian battalion and leave Georgia for Russia. Ebrāhīm Khan then took the property of Melik Bakhtam, arrested Kat'oghikos Hovhannēs and killed him. He replaced Melik Abov with another. Five hundred Armenian households left Karabagh and settled in Shamkhor. We, the meliks, request that you give us a small Russian force to retake our lands. If that is not possible we wish to settle in Derbent and be placed under the protection of Russia...

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Archbishop Argutinskii to Prince Potemkin

(January 1791)¹

The Armenians desire to leave this region [Moldavia] and settle in Russia. Your Excellency has indicated the settlements of Dobussary² or Egorlyk.³ Can they decide which one? Please favor them with an order, which grants them the use of the land and water to cultivate orchards and raise livestock. They and all other newly arrived Armenians should enjoy this privilege. The Armenians of Izmail have left their abodes and are in Kilia. They have no money to build houses and make a new start. I request that Your Excellency provide special funds to be used under my direction. I can assure you that they, like the Armenians of [New] Nakhichevan, will grow in numbers and prosperity. I request the permission to build an Armenian church here. The following is a list of the number of Armenians in this region:

Izmail	320 households	808 males	850 females
Isakche	12	31	20
Kilia	120	323	350
Akkerman ⁴	142	444	408
Bendery	120	368	398
Total	714	1,974	2,026 = 4,000

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Decree of Catherine the Great

(15 February 1791)⁵

To: The Governor of St. Petersburg, Konovnitsyn.

Stefan, the priest of the Armenian church at St. Petersburg has petitioned that We grant the permission to Councilor Lazarev to construct a stone

¹*TsGVIA*, Coll. 52, group 1/194, file 270, ff. 55-56.

²A town in present-day Moldova.

³A river in the Stavropol' Region. There must have been a small settlement near the river by that name.

⁴A fort at the mouth of the Dniestr River on the Black Sea.

⁵*PSZR*, XXIII, no. 16945.

house by the Armenian cemetery for the Armenian poor and a small stone church for the burial services of Armenians in St. Petersburg. We order that such a permit be granted.

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General Kutuzov¹ to Prince Potemkin(5 September 1791)²

Seventy-seven Armenian families have left Izmail and have gone to Dobussary. Many more Armenians have remained here. Although they wish to relocate to Russia they do not possess the means. I estimate that we shall need some 150 carts to move them and propose that we use funds from the treasury to hire drivers.³

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Archbishop Argutinskii to Count Bezborodko(October-December 1791)⁴

It was the wish of the late Prince Grigorii Aleksandrovich [Potemkin] to invite Armenian merchants residing in various Ottoman ports to settle in Tauride.⁵ A number of Armenians of Constantinople have informed me via a messenger that they would be willing to move to Russia provided that they be given assistance by the Russian minister at the Porte to secretly transfer their capital to Russia. I am sure that other Armenian merchants, residing in Anatolia will follow suit. I request that Your Excellency put this matter to our ambassador during the upcoming peace talks.

¹Michael Illarionovich Kutuzov (1745-1813), Russian military commander and the hero of the war against Napoleon. He participated in the storming of the fort of Izmail in December 1790 under the command of General Suvorov. From 1792-1794 he was the Russian ambassador-extraordinary in Constantinople.

²*TsGVIA*, Coll. 52, group 1/194, file 507, f. 33.

³A similar letter to Potemkin was dispatched in the summer of 1790 and appears in M. I. Kutuzov, *Dokumenty*, I (Moscow, 1951), 95-96.

⁴*AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Armenia, group 100/3 (1764-1800), file 462, ff. 65-66.

⁵Another name for the Crimean Peninsula.

I request that the commander of the Black Sea squadron be secretly ordered transport the Armenians and their belongings to Tauride or any other port.

I have the honor to list the names of those merchants who have contacted me from Constantinople:

Tomas Agababov, son of Voskan
Kozmos Danielov, son of Isaev
Martiros Mikhaelov, son of Laziants
Tomas Gukasov, son of Dzhelalov
Esayi Dmitriev, son of Esaev
Ogan Markosov
Kalust'ian Tumanov
Khachatur Piliposov, son of Targulov
Avedis Oganosov, son of Nur'ev

The following Armenian noblemen request that they be included in the ranks of nobility upon arrival in Dobussary and after the town is given to the Armenians to populate it:

Iakov Oslanov
Kevork Sarkisov
Krikor Mosesov

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Governor Kakhovskii¹ to Archbishop Argutinskii
(10 November 1791)²

I am responding to your two letters:

First, I have ordered that the Armenians arriving in Dobussary be given provisions and shelter in the six Cossack villages in the area.

Second, I have requested that Lt. Colonel Leitner explain his inhuman behavior toward the Armenians who were dispatched by Major Davydov³ in ten carts from Bendery.

¹Michael Vasil'evich Kokhovskii was the governor of Ekaterinoslav Province.

²SAAN, III, 331-332. Written in Jassy.

³Stepan Davydov was an Armenian from Erevan who was secretly dispatched by the Armenian Kat'oghikos at Ējmiatsin and the Armenian meliks as their envoy to Russia. The Armenians paid his living expenses in Russia. He entered the service of Russia in 1784 and rose to the rank of major, see *TsGADA*, Coll. 15, group 1, file 235, f. 4. A number of Armenian officers were

I Have also ordered that these Armenians be given the necessary supplies in Dobussary.¹

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Treaty of Jassy

(29 December 1791/8 January 1792)²

Article IV (part 4). Families who desire to leave their homes and immigrate to other places are free to do so. The said families are to have ample time to relocate, to sell or give their belongings to relatives and to conclude their affairs. It is agreed that they shall have 14 months from the time of the ratification of the treaty.

Article V: The Porte promises to issue *firmans* to the governor of Akhaltsikhe and his officials not to harass, either covertly or overtly, the land and people of the King of K'art'li [Erekle].

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Decree of Catherine the Great

(5 January 1792)³

Those Greeks, Georgians, Armenians, and Wallachians who left the Crimea for the Ekaterinoslav Guberniia are to enjoy their privileges for the duration of ten years. The starting date of the said privileges, according to the correspondence received from the Ekaterinoslav is 1783.⁴

recruited by Prince Potemkin, were elevated to higher ranks, and received decorations. Among them was Major Ivan Avramov, who served in various campaigns against the Ottomans beginning in 1781, see *AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Armenia, group 100/3 (1790-1800), file 463, ff. 311-312.

¹In January of 1792 Archbishop Argutinskii informed Bezborodko that Major Davydov was of great help during the transfer of Armenians of Bessarabia to Russia, *AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1764-1800), file 462, ff. 16-17.

²*Iuzefovich*, 44-45.

³*PSZR*, XXIII, no. 17010.

⁴The date of the annexation of the Crimea by Catherine the Great.

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Petition Submitted to Catherine the Great

(7 February 1792)¹

As Your Majesty is the Mother of all Christians and I consider myself as one of Your subjects, I have taken the liberty to voice the following:

Your Majesty is well aware that the Christians in Asia, for some time now, have been under the yoke of the Muslims, that is, the Persians and Turks. The Christians have lost their leaders and the few who remain are in dire circumstances. They rely on God and Your Highness for help.

Persia is the main enemy of Iberia (Georgia) and Armenia. Persia is currently weak and without a leader. Its various regions are divided among different nobles, some of whom are receiving aid from the Porte. If Your Majesty sends a small army to Persia, then with God's help the entire country will submit to Russia without much bloodshed. The commander of this army, however, has to be competent, aware of the local conditions and be a friend of the King of Georgia... Since Your Majesty's Empire does not need expansion, I suggest that, if convenient, You restore the Armenian Kingdom, which will forever remain loyal to Russia. If this is not possible then I suggest that Your Majesty strengthen the forces of the Georgian king so that he may restore the Armenian Kingdom or rule over that land. Persia will not be able to fight him and the Ottomans will have lost their allies. The Georgian King will be forever loyal to Russia and trade will flourish... In time, the Orthodox Christian faith shall spread throughout Persia. Russian forces and vessels shall control the Caspian and Black Seas and regular communications shall be established between the Crimea and Imeret'i. Anatolia shall then fall under Russian influence and goods can be transported via the rivers. The mountain people will be tamed and the Porte cannot use them for its purposes...

The Treaty of [1]783 with the Georgian King should be renewed, made permanent, and fully implemented. The two Jäger battalions should return to protect Georgia... The kingdom of Imeret'i was in the

¹*AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Georgia, group 110/2 (1774-1804), file 18, ff. 153-158, also in *Gramoty*, II (pt. 2), 72-75. The author or authors of this letter are not known. There are speculations that the note was written by Prince Mirian Batonishvili, Archbishop Argutinskii, Gaius Rector, or Ivan Lazarev.

past part of Georgia. If Your Majesty desires the two could join and become a single country capable of resisting the Ottomans...¹

I hope that Your Majesty shall restore the Armenian Kingdom. A number of autonomous (Armenian) regions are not under the control of the King of Georgia and with Your help they can form a kingdom. An Armenian State will attract Armenians from other parts of the world. They will gladly return to their homeland. Once this is accomplished, one of the sons of Erekle can rule as King of Armenia...

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*Catherine the Great to Governor Kakhovskii*²(23 February 1792)³

The settlement of the Armenians from the Dniestr region is your responsibility. The late Prince Grigorii Alekandrovich Potemkin-Tauridskii had designated a new Armenian city called Grigoriopol'⁴ to be built by the Dniestr between the Chernoi and Chernitsy valleys, to include the said valleys. We hereby order that: 1) the above area is to become an Armenian town called Grigoriopol'. 2) A plan of the city and its facilities for the hardworking Armenian people shall be presented to Us. 3) You are to assist the Armenians in every way possible to construct factories and workshops for their crafts and industry. The Armenian archbishop, Iosif (Hovsēp') shall assist you in this. 4) You are to try to carry out all their wishes in such a way that their compatriots in other lands, observing their happiness and security will wish to join them. 5) We expect frequent progress reports from you in these matters.⁵

¹Solomon II (1789-1810), the ruler of Imeret'i was the grandson of Erekle.

²Vasilii Vasil'evich Kokhovskii succeeded his brother as governor of Ekaterinoslav.

³*TsGIA*, Coll. 1374, group 1, file 55, f. 22.

⁴A town in present-day Moldova (on the Dniestr River, 45 km northwest of Tiraspol') known primarily for its winemaking.

⁵The Armenian community of Grigoriopol' is discussed fully in Zh. Ananian, *Armianskaia koloniia Grigoriopol'* (Erevan, 1969).

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*Archbishop Argutinskii to Governor Zubov*¹
(16 April 1792)²

Governor Vasilii Vasil'evich Kakhovskii, upon receiving Her Majesty's order, has begun the construction of the Armenian city of Grigoriopol' between the Chenoi and Chernitsy valleys. He informed me of Her Majesty's wishes and I had a meeting with the Armenian elders from Dobusary on the 4th of April. I finally convinced them that the new settlement would be better than what they had left behind. The next day, that is April 5th together with His Excellency Michael Vasil'evich and His Excellency Vasilii Vasil'evich, we went to the site and I blessed it.

Your Excellency is well aware of my efforts following the wishes of the late Prince Potemkin to relocate the Armenians to Russia. I request that when Their Excellencies Michael Vasil'evich and Vasilii Vasil'evich send the plans of the city to Your Excellency and Her Highness, that you received the courier, my nephew Prince Vasilii Argutinskii-Dolgorukii, with the same kindness you have bestowed during my visits.

On Easter Day I spoke to the Armenian leaders here. The citizens will have to learn the laws and regulations of Her Majesty. I suggest that we form a commission composed of Ivan Lazarev, Ekim [Hovakim] Lazarev, Zakhar Ivanovich, and Mr. Mirzakhani to prepare the text. My printing press in [New] Nakhichevan can print it in Russian and Armenian for distribution.

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*Archbishop Argutinskii to Platon Zubov*³
(May 1793)³

Without doubt Your Excellency will permit me to discuss matters which concern my people. His Excellency the late Prince Potemkin had asked me to represent the Armenian interests and those of the meliks of Karabagh and I now relate that history to you.

Her Imperial Majesty commissioned Prince Potemkin to make Georgia a subject of Russia. I played a role in that endeavor. His Excellency

¹Platon Aleksandrovich Zubov was the governor of Novorossiisk.

²*TsGVIA*, Coll. 52, group 1/194, file 270, ff. 53-54. Written in Grigoriopol'.

³*AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Armenia, group 100/3 (1797-1799), file 464, ff. 174-176. Written in St. Petersburg.

Prince Potemkin also asked me to write proclamations in Armenian, which I enclose, regarding the liberation of the Armenians.

When it came to freeing the meliks of Karabagh from the rule of the Persians, His Excellency once again asked me to be the emissary between them and Her Majesty. I took my responsibilities seriously and corresponded with the kat'oghikos of Aghuank', Hovhannēs. My efforts resulted in the meliks preparing provisions and fodder for the Russian army to move into Karabagh. In fact Colonel Burnashev, together with King Erekle's forces, reached the city of Ganja. The meliks of Karabagh and the Armenian population of that region all swore allegiance to Her Majesty and suffered the wrath of the Muslims. Those who survived the atrocities have asked me to relay the following to Your Excellency:

- 1) To allocate a small Russian force to help them overthrow the khan of Shushi. To appoint Prince David, the grandson of Erekle, as their ruler. The Russian army can move into the region from Derbent. The road to Baku is not difficult to traverse and from there one can easily enter Karabagh. A second army can move from Georgia into Karabagh.
- 2) If the Russian army is not willing to enter Karabagh, then the Armenians ask that you permit them to relocate to Derbent, or other settlements near the Caspian Sea. This privilege was granted to their ancestors by Peter the Great.

In [1]760 Joseph Emin, an Armenian from England, who was born in Hamadan, arrived here in St. Petersburg. He was received well by the Russian nobles and was well known to Prince Golitsyn. He gathered some 500 men around him. The Turks fearing that he will get stronger began to persecute their Armenian subjects. King Erekle, realizing that Emin cannot gather a large army and his actions are causing sufferings for the Armenians, expelled Emin from Georgia and disbanded his group. In [1]780 Prince Potemkin wished Emin to return. He asked Ivan Lazarev to write to Emin in Calcutta and invite him to return to Russia. He was told that Emin had died. Emin is alive, however, and has written to me in [1]790 and [1]791 offering his services.

In conclusion, I offer my services to Your Excellency and to the Russian State. Lazarev and I are prepared to served you in any way and sacrifice whatever is necessary to resolve the Persian situation.¹

¹On 12 and 20 September Argutinskii asked Zubov to help the Armenians of Karabagh to relocate and to grant them the necessary provisions and exemp-

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General Suvorov to Peter Turchaninov

(21 July 1793)¹

I have received a request from Major Davydov of Ararat to grant him a salary and provisions. Due to bureaucratic technicalities I cannot pay him. I request that you give him a hand in securing an appropriate salary for all his past services to Russia. In the meantime, I have given him 200 rubles for his expenses.²

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Archbishop Argutinskii to Platon Zubov

(1793)³

Armenian merchants, originally from Persia, who reside in Constantinople and other Turkish towns have maintained their Christian faith. They wish to free themselves from slavery and become subjects of Her Majesty's Empire. They have written to me stating that they are willing to settle and to conduct trade in our towns by the Black Sea...I am aware that Lt. Colonel Khastatov,⁴ who helped the Armenians during the storming of the fort of Izmail, is with the Russian Mission in Constantinople. He saved many Armenians during that war and they trust him. There is no need for funds or paperwork. The commander of the Russian fleet in the Black Sea, as well as the Russian ambassador and minister to the Porte should be told secretly by Khastatov to facilitate the departure of these Armenians. I am told that Lieutenant Ivan Aivazov [Hovhannēs

tions. He reminded Zubov of his own great services and asked that the Armenian representatives from New Nakhichevan and Grigoriopol' (both in his archdiocese) be well received in St. Petersburg, *AVPR*, Russia's relations with Armenia, group 100/3 (1764-1800), file 463, f. 251, 255-256.

¹*TsGADA*, Coll. 15, group 1, file 235, f. 12. Written in Kherson.

²On 2 September 1792 Davydov had asked Suvorov to grant him a regular salary, *ibid.*, f. 13. In February 1794 Davydov wrote to Vasilii Stepanovich Popov that he had been in St. Petersburg for 18 months and had not received his pay of 2.50 rubles per day, nor was he provided with living quarters, *TsGADA*, Coll. 15, group 1, file 235, ff. 2-3.

³*AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Armenia, group 100/3 (1764-1800), file 463, ff. 104-105.

⁴B. Khastatov arrived in Constantinople in 1793.

Aivazeen], who is under the command of Khastatov, is fluent in Armenian and has volunteered his services. I shall pray for you...

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Sworn Affidavit(1 May 1794)¹

We, the undersigned, attest that Hajji Asvatur,² an Armenian residing in [New] Nakhichevan, entered the service of Russia during the last war with the Ottomans. He served in the fleet under the command of Colonel Dambro Caccioni and was wounded on 20 August 1788. He continued to serve in various capacities throughout the duration of that war. We witnessed his bravery and devotion.

Lt. Captain Anastasii Paleologos, Major Lefteri Tsiguri, Captain Pasquale Cammi, Captain Gavrilcha Caravidi, Lieutenant Politso Giatro, Ensign Peter Igants, Lieutenant Nicholas Kharvuri, Ensign Angel Pargiakos, Ensign Constantine Psorikhas.

We also attest that Asvatur, a citizen of [New] Nakhichevan in the province of Ekaterinoslav entered the service of Russia on 1 June 1788 during the last war with the Ottomans and was wounded:

Captain Pasquali Kolocherov Captain Gavril Karavias, Captain Ivan Anargirov, Captain Panteli Kosci.

Major Strati Nikiforat.

Lieutenants³ Antoni and Paulicio Giatro.⁴

¹AVPR, Russia's Relations with Armenia, group 100/3 (1764-1800), file 463, ff. 327-328.

²According to a petition written a year later by Asvatur to Empress Catherine, he had gone on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, hence the title of Hajji (not to be confused with the Muslim title Hājji, one who had gone on a pilgrimage to Mecca). The Armenian version would have been *Mahdesi*. Asvatur's petition repeats his past services to Russia and requests that goods worth 7,614 *piastres*, which were confiscated, be returned to him, AVPR, Russia's Relations with Armenia, group 100/3 (1790-1800), file 463, ff. 323-324.

³Text has *tenent*, from the Italian *tenente* (a lieutenant in the Italian navy).

⁴The prevalence of Italian and Greek names in the Russian navy clearly indicates that the Russian admiralty recruited Aegean and Mediterranean sailors.

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Decree of Catherine the Great

(28 August 1794)¹

Following the reports from the Senate and from General Field-Marshal and Governor of Ekaterinoslav and the Crimea, Count Zubov, We decree the following:

The Greeks, Georgians, Armenians, and Wallachians who left the Crimea for the Mariupol' district shall be given funds as loans for their resettlement. The Greeks and Georgians shall receive 412,362 rubles and the Armenians 178,094 rubles. Their names shall be recorded and they shall begin repayment starting in the first half of 1795. The Wallachians are to have the same privileges as the Greeks, Georgians and Armenians... Those Armenians of [New] Nakhichevan whose lands were taken over by the army of the Don shall be given new land between the Tuzlov and Sambek rivers...

Those Armenians who have settled in the city of Grigoriopol' shall receive all the necessary help...

Those who wish to return to their original homes [in the Ottoman Empire] are free to do so after paying their debts.

Governor Zubov is to make a survey of the exact number of Armenians in Grigoriopol' and report the amount of taxes gathered for the benefit of the treasury.

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Decree of Catherine the Great

(12 October 1794)²

We have received the report of Governor Zubov on the expenditures for the construction of the city of Grigoriopol' populated by Armenians...

We decree that the sum of 102,781 rubles and 72 kopeks be allocated without repayment for the construction of a church, residence of the clergy, and a town hall. In addition the sum of 87,000 rubles is to be loaned for other buildings. The first amount is to be taken from the treasury of the Ekaterinoslav Province. The Central Treasury shall give the rest. Fountains are to be constructed and an expeditionary force will be stationed there. In addition, the sum of 1,578 rubles for the mainte-

¹PSZR, XXIII, no. 17246.

²PSZR, XXIII, no. 17260.

nance of the city hall and the sum of 1,184 rubles for the salary of the troops shall be allocated annually.

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Official Report(1794)¹

At the request of the Armenians of Grigoriopol' and by the order of Governor General Zubov following the decree of Empress Catherine dated 12 October 1794:

- 1) The sum of 46,781 rubles and 72 kopeks has been designated for the construction of 325 houses.
- 2) The sum of 37,000 rubles is allocated from the treasury for the construction of a cathedral, a monastery, and two parish churches under the supervision of the Armenian archbishop [Argutinskii].
- 3) The sum of 10,000 rubles is loaned for ten years for the construction of shops and a trading arcade.
- 4) The sum of 15,000 rubles for the construction of a residence for the clergy and a consistory. A school may be attached to this structure.
- 5) The sum of 4,000 rubles for the construction of a city hall and the sum of 2,000 rubles for the construction of coffeehouses and baths.
- 6) The necessary sum needed for the construction of water supplies.
- 7) Instead of provisions each adult shall receive 33.3 kopeks and each child 16 and $\frac{3}{4}$ kopeks per month.
- 8) The sum of 25,000 is to be loaned without interest for a period of five years to the city hall. This sum is to provide the necessary implements for agriculture.
- 9) The sum of 50,000 rubles is to be loaned to the city hall without interest for a period of ten years. This sum is to be distributed among the city merchants for the growth of trade.
- 10) In addition to the 30,000 *desiatins* of land allocated for farming around the city of Grigoriopol', 3,400 *desiatins* of land is to be given to the newly arrived Armenians from Turkey.
- 11) According to the decree issued on 14 November 1779, the Armenians of Grigoriopol' shall have the same rights and privileges as Russian citizens.
- 12) The Armenians of Grigoriopol' shall have the complete freedom to trade.

¹SAAN, I, 190-192.

- 13) According to the manifesto of 22 July 1763 and the decree of 1770, the Armenians of Grigoriopol' are free to construct factories and workshops.
- 14) After a period of ten years, the Armenians shall pay one-percent for every ruble of income from trade each year; two rubles per year from every workshop, and five kopeks a year from every *desiatin* of land.
- 15) The Armenians of Grigoriopol' are forever exempt from military service of any kind. Volunteers are free to join, however.
- 16) The Armenians are permitted to import 300 rubles worth of goods for their personal use without the payment of duty.
- 17) An Armenian court shall be set up by the city administration. The said court shall follow Armenian laws. The salaries of the court and the administration is set at 1,578 rubles per annum and shall be paid by the treasury.
- 18) The said court shall give precedence to oral testimony over written statements.
- 19) The city of Grigoriopol' shall have its coat of arms and it shall be recorded in the appropriate register.¹
- 20) Two deputies shall be elected from the Armenians of the Ekaterinoslav Province. They shall be people of rank and will be present at meetings of city and state councils.
- 21) The Armenians shall enjoy their privileges for a period of ten years.

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Count Zubov to Archbishop Argutinskii

(14 December 1794)²

In response to Your Eminence's letters received on various dates, I state that your efforts on behalf of the Armenians bring you special honor as the pastor of your people. For my part, I assure Your Eminence that the

¹Count Zubov sent the following description of the coat of arms of the city: A crown at the lower center, signifying royal favor; a single-headed eagle holding a scepter in one claw, representing the Armenian Emperor Artaxerxes (Artashes); a holy image, representing Christ who met the Armenian King Abgar; a lamb, representing St. Gregory's baptism of King Trdat and all Armenia; lions, representing the bravery of the Rubenid kings of Armenia; and Noah's ark on Mt. Ararat, representing Greater Armenia. Finally, the Russian coat of Arms on top, signifying Russian protection of the Armenian people, *SAAN*, I, 193.

²*SAAN*, III, 335.

Armenian people deserve and have earned all my attention and kindness. I shall not change my course of action and with your help will continue our government's benevolent policies toward the Armenians.¹

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Sahak Melikov to Andrei Gribovskii(March 1795)²

I have sent two letters to Platon Zubov, one in January and the other in February, and have heard nothing so far. I have also written to you and have received no answer...

I was the chief baker³ at the house of the pasha who was the Ottoman envoy in Moscow. When he wished to depart, I decided to stay in Russia, for I liked the Christian State.

With the help of Count Bezborodko⁴ I stayed in Moscow with five of my servants. They came and took us from the mission and we are now in Moscow. When the pasha found out he took whatever I possessed. I have nothing and tearfully beg that you help me as you have done for others. I served the Ottoman Sultan until I came to this peaceful country. Now I wish to serve the Christian monarch. I have no place to put my head and not a kopek for *kharji*⁵—you have to have pity on me.

¹The above is a response to a letter written by Argutinskii on 28 November in which the archbishop laments not being able to meet with Zubov due to his pastoral duties in Astrakhan. He adds that he had conducted a special mass for the health and glory of Empress Catherine and that the royal decrees (docs. 409, 410) were translated into Armenian and read to the congregation, *AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Armenia, group 100/3 (1764-1800), file 462, f. 142.

²*AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Armenia, group 100/3 (1790-1800), file 463, f. 241.

³Text has *ekmekçibaşı*.

⁴Alexander Andreevich Bezborodko was the head of the Collegium of Foreign Affairs, see biographical notes.

⁵Perso-Turkish term (*karj*) for expenses or livelihood.

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General Gudovich's¹ Report to Catherine the Great
(7 May 1795)²

According to reliable sources from various parts of Persia, Āğā Moḥammad Khan of Isfahan has defeated Lotf 'Alī Khan of Shiraz. After a three-year struggle, the latter was betrayed by his subordinates and was captured by Āğā Moḥammad Khan, who put him to death. Āğā Moḥammad Khan is planning to become the Shah. He has arrived in Tehran and is gathering troops to move on to Ardebil. He has sent messengers to Tabriz and Ardebil, as well as to the khans of Erevan and its surrounding regions requesting provisions for his army. He has also sent messages to Georgia to submit to him. He is planning to divide his army into two parts. The first he will send to Erevan, the second he will take to the Moghan Steppe by the Kura River, where the Persian kings have been previously crowned. From there, after subduing the khans of Shemakhi, Shakki, Shushi, and Talesh, he plans to attack Georgia from Karabagh. Unreliable news has reached me that Āğā Moḥammad Khan has already dispatched a messenger to Sheikh 'Alī Khan of Derbent to submit to him. I immediately sent one of my staff officers, who had served in Persia, to Derbent to ascertain the facts and am awaiting his return. He is to inform the khan of Derbent and the Shamkhal of Tarku that they are both the subjects of Russia and if they receive any messages from Āğā Moḥammad Khan, they should reply that they are the subjects of Her Majesty and cannot obey any orders. All such matters have to be addressed to me as the commander-in-chief of the region.

Moṣṭafā Khan of Talesh, whose domain faces the island of Sary (Sara), where we have placed forces to safeguard our trade, has asked to become a Russian subject. Although he was displeased at the presence of our troops in Sara, the success of Āğā Moḥammad Khan has frightened him and he has asked that he and his family be permitted to move to the isle of Sara in the event of Āğā Moḥammad Khan's attack. Āğā Moḥammad Khan does not like Russia. In fact we have heard that he has

¹General Ivan Gudovich was appointed in 1791 as the commander of the Caucasian Line. Following the invasion of Georgia by Āğā Moḥammad Khan in 1795, Catherine replaced him with Count Valerian Zubov, the brother of Count Platon Zubov.

²*AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Georgia, group 110/3 (1793-1799), file 455, f. 169; *Gramoty*, II (pt. 1), 85-89.

demanded that his subordinates in Gilan should seize a Russian boat or a Russian official in Enzeli who could be exchanged for 'Abbās Khan, who is a prisoner of Mortazā Qolī Khan,¹ in Astrakhan. Āḡā Moḥammad Khan has, in the past, dispatched Mīrzā Bābā to the governor of Astrakhan for that purpose but without success. The Russian merchants in Enzeli had been secretly informed of Āḡā Moḥammad Khan's plan and had relocated their goods to the island of Sara... Āḡā Moḥammad Khan has apparently sent a messenger to Sheikh 'Alī Khan of Derbent promising him the title of *na'ib* (king's deputy) of all of Shirvan. The khan of Shemakhi, at the advice of the khan of Shushi, did not allow the messenger to travel to Derbent. Instead the khan of Shushi sent a trusted messenger to King Erekle and me informing us of the successes of Āḡā Moḥammad Khan against Lotf 'Alī Khan. Erekle has sent me a message via Prince Abkhazov stating that except for the khans of Shushi, Erevan, and a few minor governors, most of the other khans fear Āḡā Moḥammad Khan. In fact the khan of Ganja has already submitted. I have written to King Erekle stating that Āḡā Moḥammad Khan has been fighting for three years and although he has gathered his forces and is moving on Ardebil, the Moghan Steppe is far from Georgia. In addition, Āḡā Moḥammad Khan has to overcome many local khans, including the khan of Shushi, before he can enter Georgia. I advised him, therefore, to make firm alliances with the khans of the regions. I do not see any immediate threat to Georgia. However, if Āḡā Moḥammad Khan of Isfahan does indeed attempt to invade Georgia and does take hostile action against Russian merchants in Persia, or if he threatens the khan of Derbent and the Shamkhal of Tarku to recognize him as their sovereign, then how shall I respond?...²

¹Mortazā Qolī Khan was the half brother of Āḡā Moḥammad Khan. He was appointed by the latter as the governor of Gilan in 1782. He fell out of favor and left for Russia via Transcaucasia in 1784. He settled in Astrakhan and continued to intrigue with the Muslim chiefs of the Caspian littoral against Āḡā Moḥammad Khan and his successor, Fath 'Alī Shah (1797-1834).

²Although Gudovich did not think much of the Persian military, on 28 May the Council of State at St. Petersburg recommend that Gudovich send troops to reinforce Georgia. The advice was not acted upon until September 4th when Catherine issued an order to Gudovich to send troops to Tiflis. The order arrived too late (October 1st), for, on September 11th Āḡā Moḥammad Khan's army sacked Tiflis and forced Erekle to flee his capital, *Butkov*, II, 343-345.

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Queen Darejan¹ to Catherine the Great

(6 June 1795)²

The extreme danger facing a large number of Christians has forced me to disturb Your Majesty. On the strength of the treaty between Russia and Georgia, I ask Your Highness to help us against Āğā Moḥammad Khan, who is approaching our domain with his army to conquer it. I tearfully beg Your Majesty to order General Gudovich to dispatch troops to guard us against this misfortune.

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King Erekle to Garsevan Tchavtchavadze

(20 June 1795)³

Ask Her Majesty to permit me to have an audience with the Russian commander-in-chief in this region (Gudovich), to discuss items which are beneficial to both our states... The Russian general should send two or three hundred men to meet me in the village of Chimi or in Mozdok and to escort me to his headquarters. Do everything in your power to carry this order as soon as possible.⁴

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King Erekle to Garsevan Tchavtchavadze

(29 August 1795)⁵

I have not received any letters from you for some time. I do not know if you have received my letters via Stepan. Āğā Moḥammad Khan has declared war on us. You are aware that the khan of Erevan, the khan of Ganja, and I have declared our loyalty to Her Majesty. It is forty-five years that Erevan and its khans are under my jurisdiction. All previous rulers of Persia recognized that fact. Now this vile person is planning to take this province from me and from Her Majesty. He has come from

¹Queen Darejan of Mingrelia was the wife of Erekle II.

²*Gramoty*, II (pt 2), 91.

³*Ibid.*, 91-92.

⁴Tchavtchavadze's request to the Collegium of Foreign Affairs is in *Gramoty*, II (pt. 2), 92.

⁵*Ibid.*, 92-94.

Ardebil and has laid siege to the fortress of Shushi. He has also dispatched his brothers, 'Alī Qolī Khan and Ĵa'far Qolī Khan to Erevan.¹ The khan of Erevan has surrendered his wife and son as hostages. He has, however, refused to allow Āğā Moḥammad Khan's men, some five hundred, to enter the citadel. The Armenian patriarch has voluntarily surrendered to 'Alī Qolī Khan. The latter has put him under arrest and has demanded 80,000 rubles and eight pounds of gold for his freedom. Āğā Moḥammad Khan surrounded the Shushi fortress for over one month, but its defenders held the fort. Āğā Moḥammad has withdrawn to Khatun-arkh, some six miles from Shushi and plans to invade Georgia. We know this from his secret order to his brothers, which was intercepted and was sent to General Gudovich.² Āğā Moḥammad has also sent a letter to Omar Khan and has sent a message to the inhabitants of Jar promising them 100 rubles per person if they help him invade Georgia. All this information has been forwarded to General Gudovich.³ Ĵavād Khan of Ganja is with Āğā Moḥammad Khan...For God's sake try to find a way to save us from this terrible danger.⁴

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Erekle II to General Gudovich(14 September 1795)⁵

On September 10th Āğā Moḥammad Khan laid siege to Tiflis. Although we managed to drive him away, he returned the next day with his entire army. Our small force fought him from morning until evening. We thrice threw his forces back but our death toll was mounting. Despite severe losses, the Persians managed to take Tiflis. My family and I have taken refuge in a village⁶ in the Mtiulet' district.⁷ I have brought most of our

¹Āğā Moḥammad Khan's orders to his brothers concerning the taking of Erevan is in *ibid.*, 94-95.

²The messages sent to Gudovich are in *ibid.*, 96-97.

³The message sent to Gudovich is in *ibid.*, 97.

⁴Erekle sent a similar warning to Gudovich, *ibid.*, 98-99. On 13 September Gudovich, bombarded with reports regarding the invasion of Georgia finally realized the danger and sent warnings to St. Petersburg, *ibid.*, 99-104.

⁵*Ibid.*, 104-105.

⁶Butkov identifies the village as Ananur, *Butkov*, II, 339.

⁷Queen Darejan and a large part of the population had already taken refuge in the mountains, *Butkov*, II, 338.

relics with me and many of the residents of Kazakh, Shamshedil, Shamkhor, and Karabagh have been relocated to safe places. I ask that you send reinforcements before Āḡā Moḥammad Khan decides to come after us. You shall save many from being slaughtered and rescue those who have been taken prisoner. Your troops will gain great glory. Āḡā Moḥammad Khan has taken the treasures from churches and palaces. He has also seized many princes and their wives. He has imprisoned the sister of our envoy, Tchavtchavadze, and her in-laws the Tarkhanov family.¹ We are certain that you will not abandon us. We put our trust in you and did not seek help elsewhere. We were sure you would come to our aid, otherwise we would have taken different defensive measures. If you do not send forces in ten or twelve days, all will be lost.²

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Archbishop Argutinskii to Erekle II

(27 November 1795)³

Your Bagratid kingdom was expanding and we had placed our hopes on your kingdom. I am now tearful and have poured dirt on my head.⁴ I cry for all the Armenians who are scattered around the world. The disaster,

¹The Tchavtchavadze-Tarkhanov family did not forget this incident. Years later, in 1829, Alexander Sergeevich Griboedov (1795-1829), the famous poet and playwright and the Russian ambassador to Tehran, who was married to Nina Tchavtchavadze, took a number of Georgian women from a Muslim household to his embassy in Tehran. He claimed that they were held as prisoners against their will. A Persian mob attacked the embassy and killed Griboedov on 30 January 1829. Russia, in the midst of a war with Turkey, did not wish to start a new conflict with Persia, especially since England did not favor the idea. Prince K̄osrow Mīrzā was sent to St. Petersburg with official apologies. Griboedov's corpse was brought to Tiflis where he was buried with honors. Some sources claim that Griboedov's liberal ideas and his support of the Decembrists made him unpopular with Tsar Nicholas I and that his death was not mourned at court.

²On 17 September Erekle informed Gudovich that if Russian help did not arrive soon he would have to surrender, *Gramoty*, II, 107. Āḡā Moḥammad Khan, however, did not wish to face the Russians and a week after the sack of Tiflis he left to take Shirvan. He then wintered in the Moghan Steppe and left for Tehran in springtime. He was crowned in his capital as the new Shah of Persia in March of the Muslim year 1210 (1796). His dynasty, the Qajar, ruled Persia until 1924.

³MAAC, MS. no. 2951, ff. 82-83.

⁴A Persian and Armenian phrase for great sorrow.

which has befallen your land, has made us grief-stricken.¹ I cry as well as for my family members whose fate I am unaware of. Did they survive, did they fall to the sword, or did they became prisoners? I also have no idea what happened to the Holy See during this time. Thanks to the protection of the Holy Virgin your country was not taken and the Persians have left. I believe that Empress Catherine's heart is moved toward you, your people, as well as others Christians in this region. The whole world is now aware about your bravery. God will not let you down. Your single mindedness will be rewarded. I have written all that was necessary to Zubov.

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Archbishop Argutinskii to Step'an Ter-Sahakean(15 December 1795)²

I wrote from Odessa on 20 November and from Grigoriopol' on 1 December. I explained all that has happened. I have received your painful letter of 15 November with the bitter news about Tiflis. Gudovich is at fault. Erekle had sent messengers asking him to either help him or tell him he was on his own. I told Gudovich that if did not act Georgia would be lost. His thick head did not comprehend it. I shall write to Zubov that if the Russians just march to Tiflis nothing will happen. It is easy to conquer ruins. The Persians have already accomplished that. But if they wish to go to Derbent and Baku, then Shakki and Shirvan will easily fall to them. Ganja will fall as well. From there they can go to Erevan and save the Armenian prisoners taken to Persia. If the khan of Shushi is still in his fort he will join us and we shall finish off the eunuch.³ I have sent Zubov a plan and all the proof needed explaining that there is no other way. If Suvorov arrives, the matter will be solved immediately. In January 1780 Suvorov outlined the whole plan in Turchaninov's house. Unfortunately he was transferred elsewhere. Tell Morṭaẓā Qolī⁴ that although I managed to get him an audience with the Empress, what has he done for us. If he joins Suvorov, the Persians of Astarabad will join him and the eunuch will be finished.

¹Refers to the sacking of Tiflis by the Persians.

²MAAC, MS. no. 2951, ff. 86-87.

³Refers to Āġā Moḥammad Khan who was castrated in his youth.

⁴Brother of Āġā Moḥammad Khan, who had sought refuge in Russia.

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Archbishop Argutinskii to Platon Zubov

(4 January 1796)¹

You have no doubt heard about the terrible devastation suffered by Georgia in the hands Āġā Moḥammad Khan. Sunny Tiflis has especially suffered and I have no news of my relatives in that city. I am sure that they are in need and I must, therefore, leave Grigoriopol' and travel to the Caucasian Line to help them.

When Her Majesty wished to remove the yoke of the barbarians from Georgia and the Armenian provinces of Ararat and Karabagh, my services were instrumental in contacting the Armenians and I can once again be of service to Her Majesty's military plans. Here, in Ekaterinoslav, I have presented a plan to Vasilii Stepanovich Popov and Joseph Ivanovich Khorvat for the two Armenias to be united into one region...

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Gabriyēl Yüzbaş² to David Orbelian³

(27 January 1796)⁴

We have heard that Russian troops have arrived in Georgia. For the love of Virgin Mary and Jesus Christ tell us why have they come and where are they planning to go next? Please let us know if there is any hope that they will help Christians like us in this region. If there is no plans to come to our aid we shall take precautionary measures. We hope that just as we suffered upon hearing of your misery, you shall also be saddened by the calamity that may soon befall us. May God have mercy on all those Christians who were taken captive [in Georgia]⁵...

¹AVPR, Russia's Relations with Armenia, group 100/3 (1797-1799), file 464, ff. 179-180.

²Gabriyēl was one of the secular chiefs of the Armenians of the Erevan province.

³David Orbelian was one of the generals of Erekle. He had the title of *minṣikar-başı* (Master of the Hunt) and belonged to the Armeno-Georgian family of high-ranking princes.

⁴AVPR, Russia's Relations with Georgia, group 110/3 (1795-1797), file 459, ff. 16-17, also in *Gramoty*, II (pt. 2), 124.

⁵On 17 September Erekle informed Gudovich that Āġā Moḥammad Khan had taken 30,000 prisoners, *Gramoty*, II (pt. 2), 107. Persian primary source

The following note is attached to the letter:

Moḥammad Khan of Erevan informed Gabriyēl that he had received a message from Āḡā Moḥammad Khan ordering Moḥammad Khan to appear before him. The khan of Erevan asked Gabriyēl if he had a trusted person in Georgia who could ascertain if Russia was planning to advance toward Erevan. If so, Moḥammad Khan would not obey Āḡā Moḥammad Khan's order... Melik Hakob brought a letter from Ebrāhīm Khan. It stated that Āḡā Moḥammad Khan had left the Moghan Steppe and had moved north to attack Karabagh. The fortress of Shushi was preparing for a siege and Ebrāhīm Khan had requested help from Erevan.¹

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Count Platon Zubov to Archbishop Argutinskii

(19 February 1796)²

I have received Your Eminence's notes on Armenia from Joseph Khorvat. Your devotion and services to Russia are well known. Āḡā Moḥammad Khan has usurped the throne of Persia and has attacked innocent Christians. His actions are against Russian interests and endanger our Empire. Her Majesty has therefore ordered a large army, under the command of my brother, Count Valerian Aleksandrovich, to cross into Persia. I request that you once again demonstrate your devotion and visit my brother in Mozdok. Explain the situation in Persia and help him contact the people about whom you have great knowledge. I shall be indebted to you if you leave right away. I have ordered the governor of Ekaterinoslav to advance you 1,000 rubles for the expenses of your journey.

mentions 15,000 prisoners, Ḥ. Fasā'i, *Fārsnāme-ye Naṣerī* (Tehran, 1895), 240; Reżā-qolī Khan Hedāyat, *Rowzat os-Ṣafā*, IX (Tehran, 1960), 271.

¹Gabriyēl sent a similar letter to the Armeno-Georgian nobleman and courtier, Joseph Bebutov. The letters were translated into Russian and sent by Erekle to General Gudovich and to Garsevan Tchavtchavadze, the Georgian envoy at St. Petersburg, *ibid.*, ff. 20-25. On 9 February Erekle wrote to Tchavtchavadze informing him that Āḡā Moḥammad Khan has crossed the Arax River. He urged his envoy to convince the Russians to send two to three thousand men to Tiflis and not to wait until April, *ibid.* ff. 26-29.

²*SAAN*, III, 336-337, original in *AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Armenia, group 100/3 (1764-1800), file 462, f. 33.

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Catherine the Great's Instructions to General Valerian Zubov
(19 February 1796)¹

- 1) Upon arrival at the Caucasian Line you shall take over the command and obtain from General Gudovich all the information about the number and condition of our troops in the region.
- 2) Major Generals Sergei Bulgakov, Ivan Savel'ev, Alexander Rimskii-Korsakov, Gabriel Rakhmanov, Prince Paul Tsitsianov, Baron von Beniksen, and Brigadier Fedor Apraksin should join the Caspian Corps under the command of Major General Platov...
- 4) All men and artillery have to be ready to move into Persia and occupy the provinces taken by Āġā Moḥammad Khan. This has to occur at the beginning of spring before the advent of the heat in June, July, and August.
- 5) The two battalions in Georgia have to be reinforced. King Erekle's rule should be restored in Tiflis and other Georgian provinces. With the help of Russian troops Erekle should restore his supremacy over the khan of Erevan and the Azerbaijani khans bordering the Ottomans.
- 6) The Caucasian Corps should move from Tiflis to the Kura and occupy Ganja. The rule of Christians in Karabagh must be restored² and Ebrāhīm Khan of Shushi must be saved. The Caucasian Corps must then unite with General Zubov and his Caspian Corps. Once Ebrāhīm Khan is established in Shushi, our army must cross the Arax River and convince the khans of Azerbaijan to unite against their common enemy. The two corps, with the help of the Caspian Flotilla, will take Derbent and Baku...
- 8) Admiral Fedorov will send ships to Baku and Talesh...
- 9) Each region must have enough troops, ammunition, and provisions to defend itself without the help from its neighbors...
- 11) The admiral must prepare to land in Gilan by August or September accompanied by Moṛṭaẓā Qolī Khan, who will become the Persian governor of that region. Zubov should have enough stores of ammunitions

¹*TsGVIA*, Coll. BUA, file 2799, ff. 1-7.

²The meliks of Karabagh and the Kat'oghikos at Ējmiatsin were given special attention in a separate instruction to Zubov. They were to be placed under Russian protection, *AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Persia (1722-1796), group 77/5, file 2, ff. 333-334.

and provisions in Baku and should maintain regular communications with the Russian command in Gilan.

12) Manifestos in Persian, Georgian and Armenian shall be sent to the towns and villages in all these regions prior to the arrival of the Russian troops. The said manifestos will assure the population that the Russians are there to free them from Āḡā Moḥammad Khan's extortion and torture. They should be assured of their safety and be convinced that the Russian troops will not harm them and shall respect their religious beliefs. Military discipline has to be strictly maintained and all necessary supplies obtained from the local population must be paid for.

13) King Erekle, the meliks of Karabagh, Ebrāhīm Khan of Shushi, rulers of Daghestan and Shirvan must be informed that the Russian troops are coming to free them from Āḡā Moḥammad Khan. Similar letters from Morṭaẓā Qolī must be sent to the khans of Derbent, Baku, Talesh, and Shushi.

14) Everything must be done to assure the loyalty of the Shamkhal of Tarku and the chiefs of the Kara-Kaitak, the Kazi-Kumuk, and the Avar. Money or gifts should be distributed among them and a few of their sons or relatives (not many) should be encouraged to join our army and be paid a salary. They shall thus feel a unity with us and will participate in our victory.¹

15) The young khan of Derbent must, like his father, realize the benefits of friendship with Russia. All efforts must be made to surround him with advisors who have our interests in mind.

16) All efforts must be made to protect the local inhabitants from the Lesghian and other mountain tribes of Daghestan. Our forces should avoid any entanglements with them. The friendship of the khan of Avaria is important for keeping peace in that region...

17) In order to insure King Erekle's loyalty, you must have hostages. I suggest that you recruit some of the sons of the Georgian princes and other high-ranking nobles, up to 1,000 men, into the Caucasian Corps. It would be advisable to recruit David, the son of Giorgi the heir of Erekle.

18) The Caucasian Corps and the Caspian Corps should unite in Ganja. They should not move into Erevan or other regions close to the Ottoman Empire. King Erekle's forces and the khans who are subordinate to him can wrest the region north of the Arax from Āḡā Moḥammad Khan. Thus

¹By involving these tribes, who were friends of the Ottomans, Catherine astutely preempted any Ottoman protests. She made it appear that Russia was aiding legitimate Muslim khans to overthrow an illegitimate usurper in Persia.

our forces will not be scattered and the Turks cannot protest against the presence of foreign troops along their borders.

19) Affirm the alliance of the King of Imeret'i with King Erekle without causing suspicions of the Turks, who have a peace treaty with Imeret'i.

20) If the Turks, fearing for their security, move on Erevan you are to inform Her Majesty and stop the advance of the Russian army. You are to send your forces to protect Georgia and all the territory that is legally under King Erekle's jurisdiction.

21) Christian prisoners taken by Āġā Moḥammad Khan to various Persian cities should be freed and returned to their homes and families.

22) Khans who were previously disloyal but who are now willing to submit to us should be treated well and their envoys should be well received.

23) All the khans who submit to us have to be told that they can no longer attack each other...

25) Loyal khans should be free to govern their own towns and should be decorated...

26) A military tax should be imposed on those cities that refuse to cooperate with us.

27) Once Moṛṭazā Qolī Khan is established in Gilan, he will strengthen his position in Mazandaran and help our fleet to move into Astarabad and Enzeli.

28) Try to turn the Turkmen against Āġā Moḥammad Khan...

30) You are to send daily reports of all military activities.

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Archbishop Argutinskii to General Savel'ev

(24 February 1796)¹

My relatives in Tiflis were experiencing great sufferings after the Persian invasion. I, therefore, left Grigoriopol' and traveled to the Caucasian Line. At Georgievsk I learned of the Russian invasion of Persia and was pleased... The taking of Derbent is of paramount importance. It will give hope to Melik Abov and Ebrāhīm Khan of Shushi... The Armenian inhabitants of the nine villages surrounding Derbent will join the Russian troops... Without Derbent Russian troops risk danger moving into the interior of Persia. Derbent is the key and its fall will spread terror among

¹AVPR, Russia's Relations with Armenia, group 100/3 (1764-1800), file 463, ff. 101-102.

hostile mountain tribes and even scare Āġā Moḥammad Khan. The khan of Derbent is not reliable. He feigns loyalty to Russia. I suggest that you take his children and other high-ranking officials and send them to Russia as hostages. The Armenians of the region, however, can be trusted to cooperate fully with Her Majesty's forces.¹

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Manifesto of Catherine the Great(March 1796)²

We declare Our Imperial benevolence to all the autonomous rulers and their subjects of whatever race or religion: all the *sepahsālārs*, *vālīs*, *beglerbegs*, *sardārs*, *ḥākems*, khans, *nāyebs*, viziers, *mostowfis*, *ḥāres-e tuġūrs*, *bin-bašīs*, *topçı-bašīs*, *ra'īs* of *qabāyel* and '*šāyer*, and other officials; all the *ulama*, *fazīlats* and *sadats*, *qāzīs*, sheikhs, *pīš-namāzes*, and other clerics; all the *kalāntars* *zābeṭs*, *kadkodās*, *rīš-sefīds*, and *mobāšers* of *dīvāns*; and all the merchants, craftsmen, and the other people of Persia.³

Russia, from the time of the illustrious Peter the Great, has proven its peaceful intentions to its Persian neighbor. Since We came to the throne, We have maintained peaceful relations and have concentrated on the expansion of trade between our peoples. Despite the fact that Our subjects were, at times, harassed by local governors, We ignored these confrontations and maintained normal relations with Persia. We did not react when Āġā Moḥammad Khan, during his tenure as khan of Astarabad, detained one of our frigates and insulted its captain, Count Voinovich.

We could not ignore Āġā Moḥammad Khan's attack on Georgia, the sacking of its capital, the destruction of places of worship, and the taking

¹A similar letter was sent to Platon Zubov on 20 March from Kizliar, *AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Armenia, group 100/3 (1764-1800), file 462, f. 140.

²*AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Persia, group 77/5 (1722-1796), file 2, ff. 367-375.

³The first group consists of military officers, governors, chief administrators, border guards, bookkeepers, cavalry and artillery chiefs, and tribal leaders. The second are the various Muslim religious functionaries and judges. The third are local administrators, tax collectors, and village elders. Some of the above titles do not have a precise English equivalent, while others have a single definition in English, e.g. *kadkodā* (chief of village) and *rīš-sefīd* ("white beard" or village elder).

of Christian prisoners. His actions disrupted the peace of the region, scattered its khans, and halted trade. We plan to maintain peace in our domain and protect our allies and borders... We have responded to the requests of the King of K'art'li and Kakhet'i, the various khans, and the chiefs of Daghestan, and have decided to aid them achieve peace in their domains. We have, therefore, instructed a part of our army and navy, under the command of Count Valerian Zubov—Lieutenant General of the Army, Adjutant General of the Izmailovskii Corps, Major of the Grenadiers, and the Commander-in-Chief of the Caucasus, holder of the Russian orders of St. Andrew, St. Alexander Nevskii, and St. George, holder of the Prussian orders of the Black and Red Eagle, and Knight of the Holy Roman Empire—to enter Persia and to free it from the usurper, Āğā Moḥammad Khan, who has acted as an enemy of Russia and has broken all previous agreements between Russia and Persia...

We wish to assure the Georgians, Armenians, and others that our forces will not harm them in any way and will not take their belongings. Any soldier who commits an infraction will be swiftly brought to justice. Places of worship will be protected and no one should fear the presence of our troops. We reserve the right, however, to punish severely those who aid Our enemy, Āğā Moḥammad Khan, financially or militarily... Those who join us and fight bravely on our side shall be rewarded...

To voice Our intentions, We have ordered that this manifesto be translated into various languages and read to the public in all of our domains as well as in Persia. Signed by Us in St. Petersburg on the... of March in the Year of Our Lord 1796, in the 35th year of Our Reign and the 15th year of Our Rule in the Crimea.¹

Catherine²

¹Crimea was annexed in 1783. The year 1796 was, therefore, the 14th year. The authors of the manifesto probably meant the eve of the 15th year.

²In May of that year, Zubov used the main points of the manifesto to issue an appeal to the people of Transcaucasia to help him get rid of Āğā Moḥammad Khan. It was printed on 23 May in Astrakhan by Archbishop Argutinskii in Armenian and Russian.

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Prince Giorgi to Shahamir Shahamirean(10 May 1796)¹

It is very difficult for me to tell you the events that have befallen. Āğā Moḥammad Khan came and Tiflis, which was the pride of our kingdom, was burned looted, and destroyed. The hand that wounded us shall be punished. Empress Catherine has sent us brave soldiers and commanders with much artillery. They shall also take the Caspian region by land and sea. Her majesty has opened her treasury and has sent a large force and supplies led by a great general and field marshal (Zubov). He shall put the lands of the Persians under our feet and the evil eunuch who thinks he rules the Persians will be caught with God's help. He shall then drink the bitter cup that he served us, our people and land. We are in great preparation and shall destroy their towns seven fold. With God's help this will take a short time... We have granted the district of Lorī to you... If you or any of your sons or their children come to Georgia they shall receive great kindness and can use the income from that district. You have written that we should give the district to Melik Abov, who is to act as your representative. Although your letter arrived late, we managed to contact Abov. He refused, however, and returned back to his country.

430

Archbishop Argutinskii to the Armenians of Derbent(22 May 1796)²

From: Hovsēp', the Prelate of the Kat'oghikos of the Holy See of Ējmiatsin and the chief religious representative of the Armenians of Russia and the founder of the cities of [New] Nakhichevan and Grigoriopol'.
To: The men, women, elders, and children residing in the city of Derbent and its environs.

May the blessing of Jesus Christ be with you. In the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

My heart was filled with suffering when I heard about your misfortunes at the hands of the unbelievers. God has not abandoned you. Your prayers have been heard and God has touched the heart of Her Majesty

¹MAAC, Erits'ean Coll. file 156, f. 250.

²TsGVIA, Coll. BUA, file 2802, ff. 1-6. Written in Astrakhan.

to extend Her motherly protection and to wipe out your tears. Count Valerian Zubov has been ordered to come to your rescue...

Citizens! Prove your bravery to the Russians. Cooperate and aid the forces of Count Zubov. You shall be the first Armenians to experience the benevolence of Her Majesty and be saved from the yoke of the infidel. Your behavior will serve as an example to other Armenians and will show Her majesty the devotion of our nation to Her motherly embrace.

Follow the example of my beloved sons, Manuchar Kachkachov and Averian Grigor'evich Serebrov and especially your elder, Verton, who have already demonstrated their bravery and devotion.

While in Kizliar, I asked Count Zubov if he had seen your former petitions, which declared your loyalty to Russia and your readiness to welcome its army. You shall no longer feel the yoke of the infidel on your neck. Your duty is to inspire everyone to serve Her Majesty loyally. Maybe, I shall be able, with God's help, to free our people from the hands of their tormentors...

Once the gates of Derbent are open, the gates of Armenia will be open as well. May the blessings of Jesus Christ be upon you. Amen.

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Count Valerian Zubov to Archbishop Argutinskii

(1 June 1796)¹

I had the honor to receive your various letters addressed to me and I thank you for your actions.

I have the pleasure to inform you that, thanks to God, my undertakings have so far been successful. We are ready move and are prepared to receive you in our camp. I am looking forward to meeting with you and your presence will serve to carry out the duty placed on me by Her Majesty.

¹SAAN, III, 337-338, original in *AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Armenia, group 100/3 (1764-1800), file 462, f. 40.

432

Archbishop Argutinskii to Count Valerian Zubov(30 August 1796)¹

The Armenians inhabiting the nine villages around Derbent and Mukshur met me during my visit and requested that I relay the following to Your Excellency:

- 1) The residents of the nine villages swore their allegiance to Russia on the cross and the Holy Bible in 1792 and presented their affidavits to Prince Platon Potemkin. Because of their loyalty to Russia the Persians persecuted and overtaxed them. They request that Your Excellency put their villages under the jurisdiction of the town of Kuba, which has a Russian administrator. They also wish to replace their Persian *nayeb*s with Armenian leaders elected from their own villages.
- 2) The Armenian village of Kiliavar is surrounded by Muslim settlements, which constantly harass it. They, and the Armenians who are scattered in small numbers among various Muslim villages, fear for their lives and ask that Your Excellency permit them to relocate to Derbent or to the nine villages solely occupied by the Armenians...²

¹*Ibid.*, file 463, f. 4. Written in Old Shemakhi.

²A similar letter was sent from Old Shemakhi to General S. A. Bulgakov on the same day. It included the formal petition from the leaders of the nine Armenian villages. The Mukshur region had seven villages: Village of Gachmas, led by Yüzbaşı Voskan Khazarov and the elder Gabriel Pogosov; village of Garadzhalu, led by Yüzbaşı Ioan Oanzhanov and the elder Martiros Melkumov; village of Big Barakhum, led by Yüzbaşı Abuel Mesen Ioganov and the elder Makardich Muradov; village of Small Barakhum led by Yüzbaşı Tsatur Arzumanov; village of Kiliavar, led by Yüzbaşı Ariutiun Pirvardov and the elder Ariutiun Avanesov; village of Garagutlu led by the elder Airapet Edavydov; and village of Azatoglu, led by the elder Grigorii Dzhanginov. The Derbent region had two Armenian villages: Village of Mulakhalil led by the elders Babay Iakybov and Stepan Moiseev; and village of Nugdy, led by the elders Sarkis Bairamov and Pogos Allagulov., *AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Armenia, group 100/3 (1764-1800), file 463, ff. 3-4.

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Archbishop Argutinskii to Count Valerian Zubov
(2 September 1796)¹

Willing to serve Her Majesty, Hovsēp' the Armenian archbishop, having knowledge of Persia, sends the following information to Count Valerian Aleksandrovich Zubov:

You can move your forces to the river called Gökçay, located between Shemakhi and Shakki. There is plenty of grass and wood in the area. While there Your Excellency can determine the loyalty of the khans of Shakki and Shemakhi. If they do not carry out your orders, they should be punished. This will serve as a warning to the other khans in the region...Once these regions are safe, our couriers can pass without hindrance...

From Gökçay, Your Excellency should advance to Ganja, whose governor, Jāvād Khan has asked for Russian protection. The occupation of this town will assure that the usurper Āğā Moḥammad Khan will not be able to counterattack easily and it will spread the prestige of Russia among other Asiatic regions.

It would be advisable to encourage King Erekle to gather 3,000 troops from the Georgian province called Kisekh, whose inhabitants are brave men. Such a force, under the command of Prince David, the grandson of King Erekle will spread terror among the Muslim tribes in the region.

Since there is no danger from the Turks, there is no need to send a large force to Georgia. Rather, the main army should go to Ganja. It would be easier to cross into Azerbaijan and Gilan from Ganja than from Georgia. Despite its attacks from Ebrāhīm Khan of Shushi and the Lesghians, Ganja has plenty of wheat, wood, and iron ore and is located in a strategic place.

After that you can cross the Kura River and rest in the Moghan Steppe. You can then ask Ebrāhīm Khan or his eldest son, as well as the Armenian meliks, to present themselves to Your Excellency. Ebrāhīm's actions will determine his loyalty to Russia. After that you can safely proceed to Tabriz or to Ardebil, whichever proves more suitable. You shall need, however, the son of Ebrāhīm, with his 1,000 troops, and the five Armenian meliks with their 5,000 men. If the khan of Shushi refuses

¹*Ibid.*, file 462, ff. 34-39.

to cooperate, his deception will be revealed. The Armenian meliks and their forces would then take over the fortress of Shushi and the Armenians shall join the Russian forces. The khan of Shushi puts a lot of faith in the impregnability of his fortress, but most of the inhabitants of that fort are Armenians and are devoted to Russia. They shall not raise arms against Russia. We have secretly relayed Your Excellency's benevolence to the Armenian meliks.

From the Kura River there are three roads to Tehran. The first goes through Talesh and Mazandaran, which abounds with forests and rivers and not easily traversed. There is a good road from Mazandaran to Tehran, however. The second route is from Ardebil. If one bypasses Tabriz, one can go through Soltaniye to Tehran. The region has ample provisions and a small population. Spring is the best time for this route. The mountains of Qaplankuh make travel difficult in wintertime. Ardebil is an important center. It has no major fortress and once it falls to Your Excellency the rest of Azerbaijan's leaders will all submit... The third road is from Tabriz. If Āğā Moḥammad Khan does not have a great force in Tabriz, the khans of the region will all surrender, for they hate the usurper. Once Moṛṭazā Qolī Khan appears in Astarabad, many soldiers shall desert Āğā Moḥammad Khan's army and the population will turn against him. Although Tabriz and Ardebil have enough supplies, there is a shortage of wood and it costs up to ten kopeks per liter, or eight *puds*. That region has snow throughout December and January.

It is not possible to travel from Tiflis or Ganja to Erevan from November 20th to March 20th due to the cold weather and snow in the mountains.

Erevan, that is Ararat, is where the old Armenian capital of Vagharshapat is located. Vagharshapat is an unimportant village. The Patriarch of All Armenians resides there in the monastery of Ējmiatsin. Moḥammad Khan of Erevan is loyal to Russia as Erekle's letter testifies. The patriarch, the khan, and Melik Abraham all await Your Excellency's arrival. They are prepared to join the Russian forces...

I have to remind you that when Peter the Great invaded the Caucasus, the Turks, fearing Russia, reacted by taking Erevan, Ganja, Georgia, and all of Azerbaijan. Although there is no danger from the Turks at this time, there is a general in Erzerum and Yusuf Pasha, who was the chief vizier, is now at Akhaltsikhe, which is 120 *versts* from Tiflis.

The city of Kars and its fort is 80 *versts* from Erevan. Kars has a regular garrison, but it consists of only 500 janissaries. That region of Anatolia is cold and only produces grain.

The Erevan region is warmer and has plenty of grain, wood, livestock, and water.

Bayazid is 100 *versts* from Erevan and is located at the foot of Mt. Ararat. It has its own Pasha, who usually follows his own mind. Many Armenians reside in Anatolia. They are familiar with the use of arms. Unlike the Armenians of Karabagh and Persia, however, they are not permitted to carry arms.

There is a group of Kurds around Bayazid called the Yezidis. They are neither Muslims nor Christians. They follow Satan. They prefer Christians to Muslims and have a great devotion to Russia. In the last Russo-Turkish war they expected to be liberated by Russia and wrote letters to that effect to the Armenian Patriarch at Ararat. They are brave and armed. The distance from Bayazid to Erzerum is 200 *versts*...

The road from Erevan to Nakhichevan is smooth and easy to traverse. I am prepared to sacrifice my life in the service of Your Excellency despite my age and the condition of my health...

434

Yüzbaşı Gabriyēl to Valerian Zubov

(3 September 1796)¹

The fame of your august name has spread throughout the region. We, like our forefathers, are impatiently waiting to be rescued by Russia. May God grant you the strength to vanquish the enemies of the Cross. It has been 422 years since we lost our kingdom.² Peter the Great, witnessing our misery, responded to the petitions of our *kat'oghikoses* and marched to save us from the yoke of the barbarians. For various reasons his mission was not successful. We then submitted our petitions through Stepan Davydov to Archbishop Hovsēp', so that he could present them to the August Empress. She has appointed Your Excellency to save us. We pray that God give you and your commanders a long life and good health to carry out your mission. We tearfully await your arrival.³

¹*AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Armenia, group 100/3 (1764-1800), file 462, ff. 52-53.

²Refers to the fall of the last Armenian kingdom in Cilicia in 1375.

³The letter was received on September 14th.

435

Āḡā Moḥammad Shah to Erekle II(September 1796)¹

To the Exalted and Fortunate King of All Georgia, who stands above all the Persian khans.

Seventy years ago Georgian troops helped Nāder Shah retake Qandahar. It has been seventy years since Shah Solṭān Ḥosein's death. You are a Persian.² One hundred generations of your family have been Persian. I am surprised that you have allied yourself with the Russians, whose main interest has been trading and let the infidel into your domain. The Persian Empire is composed of Muslims, Turks, Georgians, Armenians, and unbelievers of other faiths... You are to blame for last year's sack of Georgia and the death of its citizens. We would never have raised our sword against our subjects... We are asking you not to have anything to do with Russia. If you do not obey, your land will soon be covered with the tents of our army and we shall make a flowing river of the blood of the Russian and Georgian peoples. Written in *Rabi' Awwal*, in the year 1211 *hejri*.

436

Archbishop Argutinskii to Erekle II(14 September 1796)³

Your patience is being rewarded. The time of deliverance is near. Have faith in God and his everlasting mercy. The commander-in-chief of the Russian forces will demonstrate the power of the Great Catherine. I am with them and am prepared to be of service to Your Highness, despite my age and poor health. I hope that I can serve Christianity and witness the successful end of this campaign.

His Excellency Zubov has received the letter from the Turkish general in Erzerum and he is grateful to Your Highness. We have also received the letters from Erevan. Please calm Moḥammad Khan of Erevan by capturing Tavakoli Khan if possible. Once the citadel of Erevan is in our hands, the population, who hates Āḡā Moḥammad Khan, will aban-

¹*Gramoty*, II (pt 2), 146-147.

²Text has Iranian.

³*AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Armenia, group 100/3 (1764-1800), file 462, ff. 47-48. Written in Old Shemakhi.

don their fears and meet the Russian forces coming from Ganja, Tiflis, and the Kura River. Assure the khans of Azerbaijan by your letters that Her Majesty's Manifesto guarantees them their positions and property. Moṛtaẓā Qolī Khan will soon arrive here from Astrakhan and proceed to Astarabad...

437

Valerian Zubov to Kat'oghikos Ghukas

(2 October 1796)¹

By Her Majesty's order Russian land and sea forces have moved to oust the usurper, Āḡā Moḥammad Khan...Our forces are already near the Moghan Steppe by the bank of the Kura River and are prepared to cross it and face the enemy. We are sending General Alexander Mikhailovich Rimskii-Korsakov to Ganja. We rely on Your Holiness to pray for us and to prepare the population to leave the hell they are in and enter the peaceful heaven of justice, where all can follow their own religion and way of life. I kiss your right hand and remain your servant...

438

Major Serebrov² to Valerian Zubov

(3 October 1796)³

It is absolutely imperative that we take the fortress of Erevan. Āḡā Moḥammad Khan's army is in Khorasan and King Erekle, together with the Armenian meliks and his other allies can take the fortress, as they once did in the past. [Note attached to the report: The Armenian meliks, as well as Kubat Sultan of Salian, Moṣṭafā Khan of Talesh, and others have reported that the moment our forces entered Persia, Āḡā

¹*Gramoty*, II (pt. 2), 149-150, also in *AVPR*, Russia's relations with Georgia, group 100/3 (1795-1797), file 459, ff. 73-74.

²Major Aver'ian Grigor'evich Serebrov of Julfa was commissioned by Zubov to gather information on the region and report to him. His brief historical survey of northern and southern Daghestan, as well as the people and religions of Derbent, Kuba, Saliyan, Baku, Shemakhi, and Shakki are in M. O. Kovsen, ed., *Istoriia, geografiia i etnografiia Dagestana XVIII-XIX vv.* (Moscow, 1958), pp. 173-195.

³*TsGVIA*, Coll. BUA, file 2801, ff. 1-12. Written in Jevad, at the Russian camp near the Kura River.

Moḥammad Khan immediately summoned all the khans of Azerbaijan, except the khan of Erevan, to his capital Tehran. He installed their armies between Tabriz and Qazvin. He, together with his light cavalry went to Khorasan to put down the rebels there. He sent his nephew Asker Khan, who calls himself Moḥammad 'Alī Bek to Sheikh 'Alī Khan of Derbent, Moṣṭafā Khan of Shemakhi, Salīm Khan of Shakki, and Ĵavād Khan of Ganja to push us into the interior, towards Ardebil, where Āḡā Moḥammad Khan will meet us in battle. He plans to surround our army with troops from Erevan from the left and the forces of the khans from the right. He has stated that not one of our soldiers will escape alive].

When Erevan is taken and our troops have secured the citadel, then all of Azerbaijan will submit voluntarily and Georgia will be safe. The Army of the Caucasus can then proceed to the Arax River from Karabagh and Armenia...

Once the operations in Erevan are concluded, King Erekle should return to his capital, Tiflis, to defend it from any hostile forces. He should leave a number of Armenian and Georgian troops near Erevan under the command of his grandson Prince David, who is a colonel in our army. The prince is brave and is loved by the population. Prince David should be ordered to proceed to the Arax towards Karadagh, where he shall find Aḥmad Khan and secure him as the khan of that region. Our left flank will thus be protected. It is advisable to take some of the sons or close relatives of the Aḥmad Khan as hostage. Moṣṭafā Khan of Talesh and his army shall await him on the other side of the Arax (the right flank) and together they shall unite with the Caucasian Army and occupy Gilan.

While the siege of Erevan is in progress the Caspian Corps should prepare the route to Gilan with the help of Moṣṭafā Khan. We cannot enter the interior of Persia without proper preparations. The Erevan, Caucasian, and Caspian forces should proceed together into Gilan... We should recruit as many Armenian militiamen and armed volunteers as possible. It is estimated that some 20,000 Armenians, 8000 cavalry and 12,000 infantry, can be gathered in one month. To accomplish this Your Excellency has to seek the aid of the Armenian Patriarch at Ējmiatsin—that is, it has to be done in the name of the Son and the Holy Spirit.

439

Valerian Zubov to Kat'oghikos Ghukas

(10 October 1796)¹

Our Sovereign acknowledging the destruction of the kingdom of the King of Georgia has ordered me to enter Persia with our mighty land and sea forces and to save its people from Āğā Moḥammad Khan's torture. We have already crossed the Kura River and are planning to move to the Moghan and attack the heart of the enemy. To secure our forces from attack we have sent a strong army to Ganja under the command of general Rimskii-Korsakov. We are certain that Your Holiness will carry out your pastoral duties and will not leave him without your blessing and prayers to save all the true Christians from the clutches of hell. Archbishop Hovsēp' has assured us that we can rely on Your Holiness to count us among your sons.²

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General Rimskii-Korsakov to Archbishop Argutinskii

(15 November 1796)³

I cannot thank Your Eminence enough for all your labors on behalf of my army. I received Your Eminence's letter yesterday. It looks like we are on the verge of victory. I hope that Salīm Khan will not decline your request and shall permit the Armenians to bring us provisions to the Kura River...⁴

¹*Gramoty*, II (2), 149-150.

²On October 26th Zubov wrote to Archbishop Argutinskii that he had asked the Kat'oghikos to support the Russian invasion, *AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Armenia, group 100/3 (1764-1800), file 462, f. 50.

³*SAAN*, III, 340.

⁴Catherine died on 6 November 1796. On 10 November, Emperor Paul countermanded the recruiting levy and halted the Persian campaign. See commentary for concluding remarks.

Commentary¹

Historical Background

Russia's first contact with the Armenians occurred during the Kievan period.² Serious interest in the Christians living beyond the Caucasus range started, however, immediately after the conquest of Astrakhan in 1556. By the end of the sixteenth century a number of Cossack colonies were established along the Terek River. Encouraged by Georgian princes, whose lands were being raided by Persians and Turks, Russian tsars attempted to make inroads into the region. The Muslim tribesmen of Daghestan, however, pushed the Cossack armies back across the Terek.³

Armenian merchants from Persia were among the first to visit Moscow following the revival of the Russian State and the end of the "Time of Trouble." The peaceful conditions fostered by the Safavid and Romanov dynasties during the seventeenth century gave rise to additional economic contacts. Searching for new overland trade routes to export Persian and Indian goods to Europe, Armenian merchants from New Julfa began to use the Volga River passage from Russia to northern Europe. During the second half of the seventeenth century, Persian Armenians had not only settled in various cities along the Volga River, as well as in Moscow, but had managed to obtain a trade agreement from Tsar Alexei (1645-1676).⁴ The Armenians promised to divert their trade routes from Ottoman to Russian ports. Goods from India and Persia were transported to Astrakhan and from there, via Kazan, and Moscow to

¹The annotations form an integral part of each document cited in the commentary. Certain facts are repeated in each sub-heading.

²G. Vernadsky, *Kievan Russia* (New Haven, 1973), pp. 119, 259-262, 355-359.

³Kings Alexander I and Levan of Kakhet'i began the contact by sending friendly embassies to Ivan the Great and Ivan the Terrible. At the end of the sixteenth century, King Alexander II of Kakhet'i formally asked Fedor and Boris Godunov to help him fight the Tarku chief of Daghestan. For Russo-Georgian contacts, see W. E. D. Allen, ed., *Russian Embassies to the Georgian Kings (1589-1605)*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1970).

⁴See documents 10, 20.

Archangel and ultimately to Europe. The new route was less costly than the sea routes via the Persian Gulf and, at times, safer than the overland route via the Ottoman empire. By the end of that century, Armenian trade activities in Russia played a role in the emergence of secular and religious leaders in eastern Armenia.

In the eighteenth century a number of Armenian meliks¹ from Karabagh, as well as the Armenian religious leader, wary of the anti-Armenian measures of the later Safavids, sought to put Armenia under European protection.² Soon after, geopolitical realities convinced the Armenians to look to Russia as a potential Christian protector. They contacted Peter the Great.³ Peter, who wished to extend the borders of Russia to the Black and Caspian Seas, assured them that they could count on Russian support. The imminent collapse of the Safavids and the murder of a number of Russian merchants in Transcaucasia gave Peter—who had, in 1721, concluded his war with Sweden—the pretext for a Russian incursion. Russian troops crossed the Terek River in 1722 and occupied the Caspian littoral, including the provinces of Baku and Gilan.

The Ottomans, fearful of a Russian presence along their eastern border, at first protested and a year later invaded Transcaucasia. Peter, who did not want to risk a war with the Turks, reevaluated his commitment to the Armenians and concluded a treaty with the Turks in 1724.⁴ Eastern Armenia (except for the mountainous districts of Karabagh and Ghap'an) and eastern Georgia fell under Ottoman control. The rest of Transcaucasia remained in Russian hands. Those Armenians and Georgians who had aided the Russians had now to deal with the Muslim wrath. Some sought refuge in the mountains, others fled to Russia.⁵ After Peter's death in

¹The term derives from the Arabic *malik*, which has a variety of meanings including "lord." The Armenian *meliks* of Transcaucasia were minor princes and scions of Armenian feudal nobility, who had sought refuge in the mountain valleys of Karabagh, Ghap'an, and Lori, following the Turko-Mongol invasions of eastern Armenia. The *meliks* of Karabagh controlled the districts known as the *kamse* ("five") and defended their autonomy with force of arms (see map).

²See documents 40, 41, and 43; see also commentary on Israel Ori.

³See documents 40, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 53, 55, 59, and 64.

⁴See document 127.

⁵The Georgian king, Wakhtang VI, together with several thousands of Georgian nobles fled to Russia in 1723. Most were eventually Russianized, became part of the Russian nobility, and joined the Russian army, where they rose to prominent positions. Prince Bagration and Prince Tsitsianov are good examples of this assimilation.

1725 Russian interest in the region dampened. A decade later the Persians, under the leadership of Nāder Shah, restored the Safavid boundaries, expelled the Ottomans, and convinced Empress Anna to remove her remaining troops and to retire across the Terek.¹ The Russians, however, established a fort in Kizliar (Qezlar) and a number of other military posts in the northern Caucasus, which were soon referred to as the Caucasian Line.

Three decades later, Catherine the Great revived Russian interest in Transcaucasia and, in 1763, Russia established the fortress of Mozdok (Muzlik), extending the Caucasian Line to the southwest. The defeat of the Ottomans in the Russo-Turkish War of 1768-1774 and the treaty of Küçük Kaynarca² enhanced the strategic value of the Caucasus. Prompted by renewed Georgian requests and encouraged by her military and diplomatic advisors, Catherine expanded the Caucasian Line further by constructing the new fortresses of Stavropol', Ekaterinograd, and Georgievsk.

Between 1774 and 1783 Russia cautiously approached Erekle II, King of K'art'li-Kakhet'i, which comprised eastern Georgia, as well as a number of Armenian leaders in eastern Armenia to gauge their potential cooperation in the event of renewed hostilities with the Turks or Persians. Following the death of Karīm Khan (1779), the ruler of Persia and the nominal overlord of Erekle, the Georgian monarch, who had enlarged his domain at the expense of his Muslim neighbors, was ready to commit himself to an alliance with Russia. The Armenian leaders in Russia, led by Archbishop Argutinskii, were overjoyed and promised full cooperation. The Armenian meliks of Karabagh, undeterred by the Russian behavior fifty years before, were once more ready to assist the Russian forces. The kat'oghikos at Ējmiatsin and most of the Muslim khans, however, refused to make concrete promises. The latter did not trust one another, feared the reaction of tribal chiefs in Daghestan, as well as the wrath of the Ottomans. The former lacked military strength and feared reprisals from Muslims.

The dynastic struggles in Persia and the weakness of the Ottomans not only encouraged Russia to annex the Crimea, but also convinced Catherine to finally make a formal alliance with Erekle. The treaty of Georgievsk, in 1783,³ placed eastern Georgia under Russian protection.

¹See documents 172, 178.

²See document 297.

³See document 347.

Russia increased its presence in Transcaucasia by sending a small force to Erekle's capital, Tiflis (Tbilisi), and by establishing another fortress, Vladikavkaz (Burav) along the Caucasian Line. A rough road leading to the Daryal Pass, the gate to Transcaucasia, connected this chain of forts. By the end of the century, the road was improved and became known as the Georgian Military Road.

Confident of their strength following the Ottoman defeat in the Russo-Turkish War of 1787-1792 (Treaty of Jassy)¹ and relying on Erekle to defend his land, the Russians pulled their troops out of Georgia, leaving Tiflis unprotected. In the meantime, the Persian dynastic struggle had come to an end. By 1794, Āġā Moḥammad Khan, a chieftain of the Qajar tribe, had subdued all the other pretenders to the Persian throne and vowed to restore the territory of the former Safavids. Most of the khans of the Caucasus submitted, but Erekle, relying on Russian protection, refused. Āġā Moḥammad sent a number of threatening letters to Erekle, whose frantic messages to Russia were ignored.²

On 11 September 1795 Āġā Moḥammad's army sacked Tiflis, massacring, looting, and burning part of the city and taking some 15,000 Georgian and Armenian prisoners. Angered by the destruction of a Russian protectorate, Catherine ordered her army to invade Transcaucasia. A year later the Russian troops had reached deep inside Transcaucasia. Armenians once again, joined the Russian cause. Russian military activities came to an abrupt end, however, when Catherine died in November 1796. Her son, Paul, halted the Russian advance and, by early 1797, ordered the withdrawal of Russian troops from the region. Immediately after, however, moved by hundreds of petitions from Armenians and Georgians, Paul began to reassess the Russian commitment. By the end of the century Russia dispatched an envoy and some troops to Georgia. At the start of the nineteenth century Russia once more advanced into Transcaucasia and after many campaigns, which lasted from 1801 to 1859, finally annexed eastern Armenia, eastern and western Georgia, eastern Transcaucasia (present-day Republic of Azerbaijan), Circassia, Chechnia, and Daghestan.³

¹See document 402.

²See documents 416, 417, 418, 419, and 420.

³For a documentary record of the Russo-Armenian relations in the 19th century, see G. Bournoutian, *Russia and the Armenians of Transcaucasia, 1797-1889* (Costa Mesa, 1998).

Documents on Armenian Commerce through Russia and within Russia

The earliest documentary evidence of Russo-Armenian relations concerns trade. It details the various items brought by Persian Armenian merchants to Russia and the amount of duty they paid the Russian State.¹ In the first half of the seventeenth century, Armenian merchants from northern Persia (including Transcaucasia) imported low-quality silk and different kinds of woven materials to Russia and northern Europe. They then purchased furs and other various European goods such as watches and eyeglasses and returned to Persia. Interestingly, the powerful Armenian merchant groups of New Julfa, who had prospered under the benevolent reigns of Shah 'Abbās I (1587-1629) and Shah Ṣafī I (1629-1642), did not venture into Russia. They preferred the Persian Gulf and the Ottoman routes for their lucrative silk trade with Europe.²

Major commercial contacts between Russia and the Persian Armenian merchants from New Julfa began during the second half of the seventeenth century. The main reasons for this were the economic decline of the Safavid State and the loss of the privileged position of the Armenian merchants. European merchants had managed to break the Armenian silk monopoly in Persia. In addition, pressures from the Catholic missionaries as well as the Muslims to convert the Armenians of Isfahan and New Julfa had taken its toll. The Armenians thus began to look for other economic avenues and seek security in other states. Russia and India offered the best conditions.

In 1659³ a representative of the Armenian merchants of New Julfa arrived in Astrakhan to seek new avenues of trade and possibly protection. In 1660 he reached Moscow and presented Tsar Alexei (1645-1676) with a number of gifts, among them a fabulous throne decorated with thousands of precious and semi-precious stones.⁴ Trade negotiations contin-

¹See document 1.

²The economic role of the Armenian merchants from New Julfa was first discussed by V. A. Baiburtian in *Armianskaia koloniia Novoi Dzhul'fy v XVII veke (rol' Novoi Dzul'fy v irano-evropeiskikh politicheskikh i ekonomicheskikh svyaziakh)*, (Erevan, 1969). For a more recent and detailed work, see Ina Baghdiantz McCabe, *The Shah's Silk for Europe's Silver: The Eurasian Trade of Julfa Armenians in Safavid Iran and India (1530-1750)*, (Atlanta, 1999).

³In 1658 a Persian envoy arrived in Moscow to discuss trade relations, see document 4.

⁴See document 5.

ued into the spring of 1667.¹ On 31 May 1667 a trade agreement was finally signed between the Armenian Trading Company of New Julfa and Russia.² The agreement gave the Armenians permission to transport their goods to Europe via Russia. The so-called northern route went through Astrakhan, Tsaritsyn, Saratov, Kazan, Moscow, and Archangel.

These early efforts of the Armenian merchants did not bear fruit right away. The uprising led by Stenka Razin effectively closed the Volga-Caspian waterway from 1667 to 1671. The refusal of Tsar Alexei to reimburse the losses of merchants, who were robbed by the Cossack rebels, did not help matters.³ The Armenians of New Julfa continued to petition the Tsar and the Shah to help them start the new trade route.⁴ On 7 February 1673 a new trade agreement was finally signed between Russia and the Armenian Trading Company. According to the new agreement Russia agreed to exempt lost or damaged goods from duties and promised to provide security against bandits. Armenian merchants took an oath⁵ to use the northern route as their sole link for exporting raw silk to Europe. They would not sell their silk to foreigners in Persia or the Ottoman Empire, nor would they use their former Ottoman routes.⁶

Trade activities of Persian Armenians in Russia rose significantly after 1673. Raw silk and silk, woolen, or cotton cloth and precious stones were the main items brought to Russia and sold or transported to Europe. On return the Armenians brought furs, linen, velvet, whale bone, ivory from seals, knives, mirrors, telescopes, swords, pins, locks, goose down, needles, combs, thimbles, buttons, eyeglasses, hooks, silver and gold coins to Persia.⁷ It is important to add that the Europeans, particularly the Dutch, had approached Tsar Alexei with a similar plan to utilize the northern route for transporting silk and other goods. The Tsar, fearing European dominance, had rejected their offer and had made a deal with the less-threatening Persian Armenians. In 1676 the Dutch once again tried to open the northern route for their benefit. Their envoy, Kondrat von Klenk, wrote to Tsar Fedor (1676-1682) that the Armenians were

¹See documents 8, 9.

²See document 10.

³See documents 12, 15.

⁴See documents 14, 15, 16, and 17.

⁵See third paragraph of document 20.

⁶See document 20.

⁷See documents 21, 22, 24, 25, 26, 28, 29, 30, 32, 33, 34, and 36.

violating their trade agreement by continuing to use Turkish routes.¹The Dutch proposed a new trade agreement, one which would force the Armenians to permit Dutch merchants to join them in transporting raw silk freely to Archangel and Europe.²The envoy pointed out that the Russian treasury would benefit immensely if the Armenian monopoly would be broken. He added that the Armenians exported only 8,000 bales of raw silk for which they paid 237,000 rubles to the Russian treasury. More trade would bring much more profit to Russia, he concluded.³

The Dutch seem to have succeeded in getting their way, for during the next ten years they, with the help of their Armenian partners, increased their trade with Persia. Armenians settled in Amsterdam and built warehouses there. After 1686 other European nations, either on their own or in partnership with the Armenians, tried to take part in the Persian silk trade. Most important among them was Sweden. When Russia joined the anti-Turkish coalition it permitted Armenians to trade with Sweden via Novgorod.⁴From there the Armenians took their wares to France, England, Denmark, Germany, and Italy. Another route went from Smolensk to Poland.⁵

It is not clear whether the northern route carried more goods than the other routes, or if it managed to substantially reduce Persian commerce through Turkey. Anyway, by the end of the seventeenth century Armenian merchants could not compete with the merchant navies of Holland, France, and England. They had to pay a carrying fee for their goods to be transported by sea. Storms, harassment by Daghestani tribesmen, extortion by Russian and Persian custom officials, complaints from Russian merchants, and new regulations reduced the volume of trade via the northern route.⁶The Turkish land route, therefore, remained a major

¹See document 23.

²*Ibid.*

³The efforts of the Dutch envoy are detailed in *Posol'stvo Kunraada Fan-Klenka k tsariam Alekseiu Mikhailovichu i Feodoru Alekseevichu* (St. Petersburg, 1900).

⁴The first Armenian merchants to travel to Sweden via this route were Safar Vasil'iev and Anush Vardanov (1 September 1686). For the next ten years, the Armenians from Julfa used this route to travel to Sweden and Lübeck, see *TsGADA*, Coll. 100, files for the year 1686, 1690, 1692-1697 and Kh. A. Piirimiaev, *Russko-shvedskie ekonomicheskie otnosheniia i narvskaiia torgovlia v 1661-1700 gg.* (Tartu, 1962), pp. 13, 23.

⁵*TsGADA*, Russia's Relations with Armenia (1667), file 1, f. 9.

⁶See documents 27, 35.

channel of trade, especially when the Ottomans were at peace with their immediate neighbors.¹

Once Peter the Great had established himself as the sole ruler of Russia, he sought to regulate the Armenian trade passing through the northern route. Planning to make Russia the major power in northern Europe and the Baltic Sea, Peter, in 1695, reasserted the monopoly of the Armenians of New Julfa over the northern route. He continued to permit Armenian merchant to trade via Russia, but made sure that the Armenians observed the 1667 and 1673 treaties. Strict records were to be kept of all goods arriving in Russia and the duties collected at each port of entry or exit.²

Neither Russia nor the Armenians always followed the trade agreement to the letter. Armenians continued to use Turkish routes, while Russian officials collected extra duties from the Armenians. Following his victory at Poltava (1709), Peter sought to end the monopoly of the Persian Armenian merchants and replace them with Russians or Armenians living in the Caucasus and Russia.³In 1715 Volynskii, his envoy to Persia, was instructed to conclude a trade agreement that would permit Russian merchants to freely trade in Persia. This agreement was to be separate from the agreement made with the Armenians of Persia. Russian merchants had to be free to purchase silk without being harassed by the Armenian merchants. Peter also insisted that the Shah force the Armenians to abandon the Turkish route and divert their entire trade through Russia. His instructions to Volynskii make it clear that the Tsar had already made special plans to incorporate the Persian silk-producing province of Gilan and open trade routes for Russian merchants to India.⁴A year later Russia informed the Armenian merchants that they were not abiding by the agreement.⁵In the meantime, Volynskii did his best to poison the minds of the Persians against the Armenian merchants.⁶In 1719 Peter decreed that since the Armenians continued to use Turkish routes, they had lost their monopoly and would be subject to the same

¹According to contemporary sources Armenians, despite their oath, continued to carry silk via the Turkish route, see J. Chardin, *Travels in Persia* (London, 1927), p. 282.

²See documents 37, 38, 39, 42, 56, 57, 58, 61, 63, and 68.

³See documents 72, 74, 84, and 89

⁴See document 77.

⁵See document 78.

⁶See document 83.

duties as other merchants.¹ A year later the Tsar modified the order to include only goods sold in Russia.² By 1723 Peter ordered that Armenian merchants must sell most of their silk to Russian merchants in Russia.³ Armenians were also subjected to new duties on merchandise brought into or transited through Russia.⁴ Despite all the efforts of Peter the Great, Russian merchants were unable to compete with Armenians in Persia and part of that trade remained essentially in Armenian hands.⁵

The fall of New Julfa and Isfahan to the Afghans destroyed the economic strength of the Armenian merchants of Persia.⁶ The Russian and Turkish invasions of the Caspian littoral and Transcaucasia also halted much of the Persian trade to Europe via Russia.⁷ There is no documentary evidence of substantial trade activity until the resurgence of Persia under Nāder Shah. The Russo-Persian Treaty of Rasht (1732) and the Russo-Persian Treaty of Ganja (1735), both contain significant clauses regarding trade.⁸ Russian consuls in Rasht and Enzeli kept an eye on trade and protected the interest of Russian (and Russian Armenian) merchants.

Trade began to revive the moment hostilities ended. Armenians from Julfa and India once more began to use the Astrakhan route.⁹ Restrictions on taking gold or silver coins,¹⁰ irregular duties, as well as pilfering by local khans and Russian officials, brought on numerous complaints.¹¹ A number of Persian Armenian merchants decided that it would be simpler to relocate their capital to Russia and open silk works and cloth factories

¹See document 90.

²Document 92. Russian officials in Constantinople were told to keep an eye on Persian goods traded there, see document 93.

³Document 112.

⁴Document 116. Peter's intentions to encourage Russian subjects to engage in the Persian trade is outlined in *Article 4* of the Russo-Persian Treaty of 1723, see document 119.

⁵See document 278. English traders made major inroads in the commercial activities in Persia during the 18th century to the detriment of Armenian merchants, see J. Hanway, *A Historical Account of British Trade over the Caspian Sea* (London, 1753).

⁶See documents 96, 118, and 191.

⁷See document 182

⁸See documents 172 (*Article 3*), 178 (*Article 5*).

⁹*Ibid.*

¹⁰See document 225.

¹¹See documents 187, 190, and 232.

in Astrakhan. Raw material could be easily transported from Persia, India, or Syria to Rasht and Enzeli, and from there by boat to Astrakhan.¹ As residents of Russia, Armenian merchants could demand and receive aid from Russian representatives abroad and be subject to lighter taxes.² By the end of the 1730s, therefore, trade between Persia, India, and Russia increased significantly.³

The 1740s witnessed an even greater transfer of Armenian capital to Russia. The murder of Nāder in 1747 and the turmoil that followed reduced many Persian Armenians to poverty⁴ and encouraged some Persian Armenian merchants, for example the Lazarevs, to move to Russia. Silk works were begun in Astrakhan and Kizliar. To encourage the growth of manufacturing in Russia, Armenian entrepreneurs were exempt from taxes for a number of years and could hire laborers.⁵ The Russian Armenians were even permitted to construct vessels suitable for navigation on the Caspian Sea.⁶ Armenians from Persia now concentrated on exporting raw materials to their co-religionists in Russia.⁷ Some of the merchandise remained in Russia, while a part of it, especially raw silk, was still exported to Holland.⁸ By the mid-eighteenth century, Armenian merchants residing in Astrakhan, Moscow, and St. Petersburg had amassed enough capital to open factories and possess their own trading vessels.⁹ In addition to raw silk and woven fabrics, they were also engaged in the sale of jewels and other luxury items from Asia and Europe.¹⁰ They also sold flour and horses to Persia,¹¹ and lumber and iron, ropes, leather, canvas, fish roe, dried fish, sails, canvas, and gravel to Europe.¹² Their success prompted other Armenians from Persia, Syria, and present-day Iraq to transfer their capital and to settle in Russia.¹³

¹See document 189.

²See documents 194, 198, and 201.

³See documents 201, 203, and 205.

⁴See documents 278, 285.

⁵See document 209.

⁶See document 212.

⁷See document 224.

⁸See document 235. Persian Armenians, however, continued to move goods to Europe via the Ottoman empire.

⁹See documents 251, 254.

¹⁰See document 245.

¹¹See documents 240, 260.

¹²See document 261.

¹³See document 266.

The reign of Catherine the Great was responsible for the real burgeoning of Armenian trade activities in Russia. Catherine not only favored her Armenian subjects, but also encouraged Armenians from other regions to settle in Russia. She granted state lands to Armenian businessmen to start silk works,¹ and aided Armenian merchants in times of political instability or natural disasters.² She reversed a number of decrees, which hampered Armenian merchants in Russia and enabled them to become even more successful.³

At her direct order thousands of Armenians from the Crimea were relocated to Russia following the Russo-Turkish War of 1768-1774. Catherine not only gave the Armenians land, provisions, and loans, but also exempted them from billeting soldiers, the draft, and certain taxes. She encouraged them to engage in trade and manufacturing. Soon after the Armenians settlements along the Don, especially New Nakhichevan, became another center of Armenian trade.⁴ The death of Karīm Khan and the civil war that ensued ended the last vestiges of Persian Armenian trade activities.⁵ They either went bankrupt or relocated their businesses and families to Russia. More Armenians migrated from the Ottoman empire (Bessarabia/Moldavia) to Russia following the Russo-Turkish War of 1787-1792.⁶ Once again Catherine's generosity enabled the Armenians to settle in a new city, Grigoriopol', and to engage in farming or manufacturing.⁷ By the end of the eighteenth century, a number of Armenian merchants from Constantinople were willing to move to Russia as well.⁸ In all although Armenian trade with Europe and Asia declined during the reign of Catherine the Great, the volume of their trade within the Russian empire increased; thus setting the stage for the rise of the economic and political power of Russian Armenians during the nineteenth century.

¹See document 271, 273.

²See document 297.

³See document 290.

⁴See documents 289, 299, 300, 301, 302, and 303.

⁵See documents 349, 359.

⁶See documents 395, 397, 398, 399, 400, and 401.

⁷See documents 403, 404, 409, 410, and 411.

⁸See document 407.

Documents Relating to Israel Ori

The Perso-Ottoman wars, which had taken place during most of the sixteenth century, devastated parts of eastern Armenia, especially the Erevan-Nakhichevan region. Two kat'oghikoses of Ējmiatsin had sought aid from the Pope in the third quarter of that century, but their efforts bore no fruit. A century later, Kat'oghikos Hakob of Julfa convened a secret meeting in Ējmiatsin in 1677 with an idea to once again seek help from the West to free Armenia from Muslim rule.

The documentary record regarding the date and the location of this meeting is worth examining. In a letter written by the Armenian meliks to Johann Wilhelm of the Palatinate (29 April 1699), the meeting took place in Ējmiatsin in the year 1678 (*aux Trois Eglises l'an 1678*).¹ Other primary sources repeat this date. In their copy sent to Peter the Great, written in Armenian, Latin and Russian on the same day, the meliks record the year of the meeting as 1674 (*quod anno 1674; v' leto 1674*).² A letter written by Ori on 29 July 1701, not only repeats the error but also moves the location to Erevan (23 *goda*, v' *Revāni gorode*, "in the 23rd year [1123=551=1674] in the city of Revan").³ Most scholars agree that the meeting took place in Ējmiatsin. The khan of Erevan would have undoubtedly been informed if such a large and secret gathering had taken place in the city. Ējmiatsin, as the Holy See, however, could convene a meeting without giving rise to any suspicion. It is obvious that Ori meant that the meeting took place in the province of Erevan—where Ējmiatsin is located—and not the city. Scholars also agree that the 1674 date must have been a clerical error. Later scholarship fixed the date of the meeting as having taken place in early summer 1677 at Ējmiatsin. The argument for this date rests on another primary source, Zak'aria Agulets'i, who records that Kat'oghikos Hakob, left Ējmiatsin on 1 July 1677 and never returned.⁴

Armenian secular and religious leaders, who took part in the secret gathering voted to send a delegation, headed by the kat'oghikos, to Europe. The group reached Constantinople, where the elderly Hakob fell ill and died. Although the mission was abandoned, a 20-year old son of

¹*Ezov*, doc. 5.

²See document 40.

³*Ezov*, doc. 44.

⁴Zak'aria Agulets'i, *Dnevnik* (Erevan, 1939), p. 118.

Melik Israyēlean, Israel Ori stayed on and with the help of Armenian merchants reached Venice. For the next two decades Israel's adventures reads like a heroic novel. He joined the French army, fought against the British, was captured, escaped, and made a career as a soldier in the Rhineland. Minas Vardapet states that he married and had children¹and, according to one source, converted to Catholicism.²In 1698 he entered the service of Johann Wilhem, the Elector of the Palatinate and convinced him to accept the Armenian crown. Ori maintained that the Armenians and Georgians were willing to overthrow the Muslims, but that they needed a leader. Johann Wilhelm gave Ori letters of support and he returned to Armenia in 1699.

Most Armenian religious and secular leaders refused to accept Ori's plan, which, according to some historians, also included the union of the Armenian Church with that of Rome, but a small group of meliks welcomed Ori and gave him letters seeking aid from Johann Wilhelm,³the Pope,⁴the Grand Duke of Tuscany,⁵and Peter the Great.⁶Ori returned to Europe, accompanied by Vardapet Minas, the representative of the meliks. In 1700 Ori and Minas met with Johann Wilhelm and Emperor Leopold I, who advised them to seek the help of Tsar Peter, whose territory lay between Armenia and any European army. Armed with letters from Johann Wilhelm⁷and Leopold,⁸Ori and Minas traveled to Russia via Poland.⁹They reached Smolensk on 30 June 1701¹⁰ and arrived in Moscow on 7 July.¹¹Ori met with Golovin, Peter's chief minister of foreign affairs, as well as with the Tsar, who promised help following the conclusion of his war with Sweden.¹²

Overjoyed, Ori informed the kat'oghikoses at Ējmiatsin and Gandzasar, as well as the Karabagh meliks of his success.¹³They in turn sent

¹See document 52.

²*Krusinski*, I, 178.

³*Ezov*, doc. 5.

⁴*Ezov*, doc. 2.

⁵*Ezov*, doc. 3.

⁶See document 40.

⁷See document 41.

⁸See document 43.

⁹See document 44.

¹⁰See document 45.

¹¹See document 46.

¹²See documents 46, 47, 48, and 49.

¹³See documents 50, 52, and 54.

messages of support and wrote to the Tsar that they were prepared to assist the Russian army.¹ Wishing to assess the true conditions of the region and to motivate those religious and secular leaders, who were apprehensive about his plan, Ori asked Peter's permission to travel to Transcaucasia and Persia.² Fearing opposition from Kat'oghikos Nahapet and hearing that the French diplomats and missionaries in Persia had the ear of the Shah,³ Ori decided to obtain stronger credentials. In 1704, carrying letters from Tsar Peter⁴ and Archil of Georgia,⁵ he returned to Europe and managed to obtain the position of envoy of the Pope to Persia. In 1706, Ori returned to Russia and asked Peter to supply him with a letter of introduction to the Shah of Persia.⁶

On 14 June 1707, Ori accompanied by 37 Europeans and Russians set off for Persia.⁷ He traveled to Astrakhan and Shemakhi and visited Gandzasar and Ējmiatsin.⁸ Rumors reached the Persian court at Isfahan that a Russian ambassador was coming with a large retinue. They added that Ori claimed to be descended from Armenian kings and that he wished to restore his kingdom.⁹ The missionaries received word that Ori planned to expel them from Persia. European merchants felt that his mission would open the door for Russian merchants in Persia. The French envoy, who had concluded a treaty with Persia for the expansion of trade and the protection of Catholic missionaries in Persia, began to spread the rumor about a prophecy which predicted that the Armenian kingdom would one day be revived with the help of Russia.¹⁰ The French pointed out that the letters in Israel Ori's name formed the words *il sera roi* ("he shall be king").¹¹ Ori arrived in Isfahan in early November 1708. Although the letters from Peter, Leopold, and the Pope calmed the Persians

¹See documents 50, 52, and 53.

²See document 55.

³See document 50, note 3.

⁴*Ezov*, docs. 121, 123.

⁵*Ezov*, docs. 126, 127.

⁶See documents 59, 60.

⁷See document 60, note 3.

⁸See document 64.

⁹There is a document which indicates that Ori had purchased weapons and ammunition from Amsterdam and was taking them to the Armenians in Transcaucasia, see *Ezov*, doc. 144. It is possible that spies informed Isfahan of Ori's action.

¹⁰Ori cites the same prophecy in document 46.

¹¹*Krusinski*, I, 175-177.

and the French, they still remained suspicious and refused to let him stay long. Ori's main activity during his short stay was to petition the Shah to instruct his officials to treat the Armenians better.¹ Ori returned to Astrakhan and after sending a few reports died in August 1711.²

A little known fact about Ori's activities in Persia is his involvement in trade. Father Krusinski, the procurator of the Jesuits in Isfahan, who was in the Persian capital during Ori's visit, has the following comments:

*This Armenian having conducted the Negotiation [in Europe] to the Czar's Satisfaction, he desired that as a Reward for his Services, he would gratify him with the Embassy to Persia, as the most proper Means he could think of to enrich himself in a little Time, because as the Ambassadors pay no Customs in Persia, he proposed to carry with him, which he did, a great Quantity of Valuable Merchandize, by which there was vast Gain to be made, Considering the Exemption from the ordinary Duties...[Ori] was more a Merchant than an Ambassador.*³

There is documentary evidence that Ori had borrowed money from Armenian merchants in Europe.⁴ He had no income or personal fortune and needed funds to accomplish his goals. He probably convinced some Armenian merchants to contribute funds to liberate Armenia from Muslim rule. These merchants in all probability asked to accompany him to Persia so that they could import goods duty free.⁵ Records indicate that Ori also became partners with European merchants. In a document dated 18 July 1707, Ori asked the Tsar to permit him to transport his goods from Archangel to Persia duty free.⁶ In addition, one must remember that according to one primary source, Ori may have been carrying weapons for the Armenians in Transcaucasia and needed Russian protection. Another document, dated 21 September 1707, states that European and New Julfan merchants accompanied Ori to Astrakhan. The quantity or type of goods carried by Ori and his partners to Persia has not been re-

¹See document 66.

²See documents 67, 69, and 70. Although Esayi asserts that Ori was killed (see document 94) there are no corroborative sources.

³Krusinski, I, 174-175.

⁴See document 75.

⁵See document 75.

⁶TsGADA, Coll. 77 (1707), file 4, f. 2.

corded.¹ According to Krusinski what had started as a party of three dozen Europeans and Russians had grown to a group of 200 persons.²

The failure of his embassy in Persia and the realization that he could not return there probably enticed Ori to once more take advantage of his diplomatic status. There is a complete record of the immense load of merchandise that Ori took from Persia to Russia. The document clearly indicates that in addition to horses purchased for the Tsar,³ an entire shipload of merchandise, consisting of Persian and Indian cloth, raw cotton, raw silk, carpets, expensive fabrics, embroideries and animal skins arrived in Astrakhan and cleared customs for Moscow. Although some of that merchandise belonged to Ori's partners, a sizeable part of it belonged to Ori.⁴ Following Ori's death, his property was valued at more than 30,000 rubles and numerous individuals came forth with claims that he owed them money or goods. Although Minas Vardapet thought that the claims were false, some of them may have been valid.⁵

Documents Dealing with Armenian and Armeno-Georgian Squadrons

Following the fall of Isfahan to the Afghans and the arrival of Peter the Great and his army at Astrakhan, that is, between the summer of 1722 and the summer of 1723, irregular Armenian armed volunteers formed units to assist the Russians. They were led by Armenian secular and religious leaders in Russia, Georgia, as well as Karabagh and Ghap'an, who viewed the arrival of the Russians as the time for their deliverance from the Muslim yoke.

Three individuals were responsible for the formation of what later became known as the Armenian Squadron. The first was Petros, son of Sargis,⁶ a Persian Armenian who had traded in Russia since 1707 under the name of Peter Sergeev and who had settled in Astrakhan. On 9 August 1722, Petros, Minas Vardapet, Aivaz, son of Abraham of

¹A document, dated 21 September 1707, stated that European and New Julfan merchants accompanied Ori to Astrakhan. They carried merchandise, but since they paid no duty the amount and type of the goods were not recorded, *ibid.*, (1710-1712), file 1, ff. 20-21.

²See document 175.

³See document 70.

⁴See document 69 for the description of the various goods.

⁵See document 82.

⁶He is known as Petros di Sargis Gilanents'.

Shemakhi, and twelve others accompanied the Russian expeditionary force into Derbent.¹ Minas dispatched Aivaz to Shemakhi, while Petros and the others were sent to Gilan for the purpose of gathering and transmitting information. Realizing the precarious position of the Armenians in Persia and wishing to aid the Russian units in Gilan, Petros recruited some local Armenians, who joined his Armenian companions from Russia. He formed a unit of fifty to a hundred men at his own expense, sent important information about the conditions in Persia to Minas.²

In the meantime, the above-mentioned Aivaz formed another unit. Aivaz had converted to Russian Orthodoxy and had settled in Russia under the name of Semen Romanov.³ The governor of Astrakhan, Fedor Apraksin, recruited Aivaz and a handful Armenian volunteers from Astrakhan, Derbent and Shemakhi to serve in the Russian army. He took part in the capture of Enzeli and Rasht.⁴ He then united his band with that of Petros.⁵

Aghazar, son of Khach'ik Akhijanents', formed the third group. He was an Armenian from New Julfa who, in 1722, left his wife and children and with a small band of followers joined Peter's unit in Gilan to help the Russian campaign. For the next three years he served as a soldier and courier.⁶

In June 1723, following Peter the Great's declaration to the Armenian people,⁷ the three units were combined and formed the Armenian Squadron. The squadron then joined the Russian irregular forces, composed of Cossack groups, in the Gilan-Mazandaran region. Under the command of Major General Vasilii Levashov, the irregular forces played a major role in the success of the Russian campaign in that region.

Initially, the Armenian squadron was maintained wholly by Petros, Aivaz, and Aghazar, who paid for the horses, ammunition, and food of the Armenian volunteers out of their own pockets.⁸ Petros was killed at the end of 1724 during the Russian campaign in Gilan.⁹ Several months

¹See document 97.

²See documents 100, 118.

³He is also referred as Aivas or Aivaz Avramov, see document 98.

⁴See document 110.

⁵See document 138.

⁶See document 130.

⁷See document 115.

⁸See documents 100, 138, 175, and 223.

⁹See document 138.

later Aivaz was also killed in action.¹ After the deaths of Petros and Aivaz, Aghazar took over the command of their units as well. He changed his name to Lazar Khristoforov and led the Armenian Squadron from 1725 until his death.²

After January 1725, by the order of Peter the Great, the Armenian Squadron became an irregular unit in the Russia army and its men were given ranks and salaries.³ Soon after becoming a part of the Russian army, the Armenian Squadron rose to between six and seven hundred men, who were divided into four to six battalions.⁴ The new recruits were *yüzbaşıs* from Karabagh and their followers, who had rebelled against the Persians or Turks and could not return home.⁵ One of them, Avan, led a battalion of 250 men.⁶

The squadron remained in the Caspian region until 1735. After the total Russian withdrawal from the Caspian littoral following the treaty of Ganja, Empress Anna disbanded all the irregular groups that had served with the Russian forces in the Persian provinces.⁷ The Armenian Squadron did not disappear, however. Letters of commendation from Russian generals, as well as the need for interpreters, saved it.⁸ It became a regular unit of the Russian army and was stationed in Astrakhan until 1746. Its numbers were reduced and its members were now trained as Russian soldiers. The composition and command remained in Armenian hands.

From 1746 until 1764 the squadron was housed in the new fort of Kizliar, located southwest of Astrakhan.⁹ The squadron took part in major battles during the Russo-Turkish War of 1735-1739 and the Russo-Swedish War of 1741-1743.¹⁰ Some of its members received commendations¹¹ and Lazar was promoted to the rank of major general, the highest

¹He was killed in the summer of 1725.

²See documents 138, 142, 166, 175, 183, 210, 216, 221, and 223.

³See documents 142, 175, 183, 210, and 216.

⁴See document 151.

⁵See document 223.

⁶See document 210.

⁷See document 180. Following the treaty of Rasht (1732), the Armenian Squadron had moved from Rasht to Derbent. Anna stated that their participation was minimal and not cost effective.

⁸See document 185.

⁹See document 226.

¹⁰See documents 214, 262.

¹¹See document 262.

military rank of any Armenian in the eighteenth century.¹ After the death of Lazar in 1750, Lieutenant Colonel Peter (Petros) Kasparov commanded the squadron.²

The documentary evidence points to yet another squadron, the so-called Georgian Squadron, which was composed primarily of Georgian Armenians.³ The unit was formed by P'arsadan Bek Ghuzanents' in 1723.⁴ He, and his two sons, Rafayēl⁵ and Tali Bek,⁶ gathered Armenians from Georgia and joined the army of King Wakhtang VI to repulse the Ottomans and Lesghians. The father and sons had previously served in the Persian army and had seen action in Transcaucasia and Persian Azerbaijan. In 1724, the unit followed King Wakhtang to Astrakhan, where it joined other irregular battalions in the Russian army. P'arsadan Bek was killed and Rafail took over the command of the squadron in late 1724.

In the meantime another Georgian Armenian, Filibek (P'ilibek) Basaurov, son of Shergilov, had gathered another group of Georgian Armenians and had gone to Tabriz⁷ to fight the Turks. By 1725 he and his group of 150 volunteers went to Russia and joined the Georgian Squadron.⁸

In 1725 Peter the Great made the Georgian Squadron a separate unit in the Russian army as well. Rafail and his men were given ranks and salaries. In 1735 the Armeno-Georgian irregular unit, which had served in Persia until the total Russian withdrawal, was disbanded as well. It too was saved and became a regular unit within the Russian army of Astrakhan. Its numbers were reduced and they had to be trained as Russian soldiers. Colonel Rafail commanded the squadron until 1745.⁹ Rivalries between him and Basaurov led to Rafail's transfer to the Georgian Hussar Regiment. His brother, Lieutenant Colonel Taga and Basaurov then jointly led the squadron for several years.¹⁰

¹See document 175.

²See document 262.

³Some documents refer to it as the Armeno-Georgian Squadron.

⁴See document 118. P'arsadan was the father-in-law of Davit' Bek.

⁵He is soon referred to as Rafail Kuzanov.

⁶Also known as Taghi. He is soon referred to as Taga Kuzanov.

⁷Some sources mention him in Erevan as well.

⁸See document 185.

⁹See documents 179, 192, 210, and 216.

¹⁰See document 223.

By the 1750s the Armenian and Georgian Squadrons began to lose their members to disease and old age.¹ The political atmosphere under Empress Elizabeth discouraged new recruits. The two were soon considered one squadron with two separate commanders, Kuzanov and Kasparov.² The Armenian Squadron, reduced to twelve members, and the Georgian Squadron, down to thirty-eight members, were finally disbanded in the spring of 1764.³

*Documents Dealing with Armenians from India*⁴

In the second half of the eighteenth century, two Armenians from India played an active role in the birth of the Armenian enlightenment and emancipation movements. Both wished to bring Armenia out of its Asiatic mold and imbue it with the spirit of the Enlightenment. The first, Joseph Emin, felt that a joint force of Armenians and Georgians, could, with the help of Russia, drive the Muslims from the Armeno-Georgian historic lands and create a pro-Russian Christian buffer zone in the region. The other, Shahamir Shahamirean, realized the importance of modern education for Armenians, the development of an Armenian national identity, and the creation of an independent Armenia.

Emin was born in 1726 in the Persian town of Hamadan. The first sixteen years of his life were spent in Persia, where he and his family witnessed the havoc brought upon by the Afghans on the Persian and Armenian population. He learned Persian and Armenian and in 1744 he joined his merchant father in Calcutta. Despite his father's efforts, Emin was not interested in trade. He was attracted mainly by the English military and England's enlightened political system. Early on he felt that under the leadership of Western-trained officers, Armenians could achieve freedom from Muslim rule. In 1751 he left for London, without the consent of his father, who refused to supply him with funds. After spending four hard years in London, he accidentally befriended Edmund Burke in St. James's Park. In 1756 on the recommendation of Lord Northumberland and the Duke of Cumberland, he received a scholarship to the

¹See documents 221, 228, 244, and 254.

²See document 258.

³See documents 276, 279.

⁴For an overview of the Armenians in the India, see G. Bournoutian, "From the Mughals to the Raj: Armenians in the Indian Subcontinent (ca. 1550-1858)," in *A History of the Armenian People*, II (Costa Mesa, 1994), 43-50.

Woolwich Military Academy. A year later, Emin joined the Anglo-Prussian forces and fought the French. After further adventures in Europe, Emin, in 1759, left for Alexandretta. He traveled through western Armenia, where he witnessed the subservient behavior of his fellow Armenians toward their Turkish overlords. Leaving Turkish Armenia, he went to Persian Armenia. In 1760 he met with Kat'oghikos Hakob IV at Ējmiatsin and sent a message to Erekle II.¹ He hoped to form a joint Armeno-Georgian force to free Armenia. After facing serious opposition from the Armenian clergy, he returned to London in 1761.

Like Israel Ori, Emin soon realized that any military undertaking in the region required the support of Russia and the meliks of Karabagh. In 1761 he obtained a passport to travel to Russia.² He arrived in St. Petersburg, met with Chancellor Vorontsov³ and other important Russian officials, presented his plan, and asked permission to travel to Georgia. Armed with letters from Vorontsov,⁴ Emin, in 1762, traveled to Astrakhan and after some difficulties with the local Russian authorities he arrived in Tiflis in 1763.⁵ Accompanied by Armenian volunteers, Emin proposed to create a modern army. He assured Erekle that a general uprising by the Armenians, including those in Turkey,⁶ would facilitate the resurrection of two great Christian nations.

At first Erekle showed interest, but his fear that Emin, now rumored to be an Armenian prince, would attract the loyalty of the Armenians of Tiflis, as well as a disparaging message against Emin from the new Armenian kat'oghikos, Simēon, made him suspicious and he asked Emin to leave Georgia.⁷ Emin remained in the North Caucasus for some years and in 1766 he went to Karabagh to gather support there. Witnessing the divisions among the meliks and clerics in Karabagh, he tried once more to meet with Erekle in 1768. He was informed that Erekle did not wish to

¹In 1758 Emin had written a long letter to Erekle, which was sent from Basra via an Armenian merchant, *Emin*, I, 108-113.

²See document 267. His letter (in English) of 1 September 1761 to Golitsyn requesting the travel permit is in *TsGADA*, Coll. 1263, group 1, file 8177, ff. 1-2.

³Golitsyn sent Vorontsov a recommendation as well as a biographical sketch about Emin (in French) from London, see *POII*, Coll. 36, group 1, file 1105, ff. 121-122.

⁴Vorontsov letter to Erekle is in *TsGADA*, Coll. 1261, group 1, file 380, f. 1.

⁵See documents 268, 269, 270, and 272.

⁶See Vardapet Hovnan's letter to Emin in document 276.

⁷See document 279.

lose his Armenian fighters who protected Georgia against the Lesghians. Emin was told to leave or forfeit his life. Unsuccessful in all his attempts, Emin, in 1770, returned to India via Persia. For the next thirty years Emin tried to secure financial support from the Armenian merchants to liberate Armenia. In 1790 and 1791 he communicated with Argutinskii and offered his services to free Armenia.¹ He died in India in 1809, during the First Russo-Persian War, when Russian troops conquered a large chunk of eastern Armenia and annexed all of eastern Georgia.²

Shahamirean was born in New Julfa in 1723. He moved to Madras in the 1740s and became a successful merchant. He was the major exponent of education as a tool for Armenian self-awareness. In the early 1770s Shahamirean, together with a number of Armenian merchants, established an Armenian press in Madras and sent funds for the establishment of a press at Ējmiatsin. Shahamirean employed Movsēs Baghramean, of Karabagh, to teach Armenian to his sons and was aware of Emin's work.

His son Hakob, together with Movsēs, published a number of booklets. Most important of these was *Exhortation*,³ which encouraged Armenian youth to work hard for the liberation of their land from Muslim rule. A second noteworthy work written by Shahamirean and published fifteen years later by his other son Eghiazar, was *The Snare of Glory*,⁴ which is in essence a draft of the constitution of a future Armenian state.

Shahamirean was in constant contact with the Armenians in Russia and Transcaucasia. The Treaty of Georgievsk (1783) made Russia and Georgia more receptive to receive military aid from the Armenians. Archbishop Argutinskii, a major proponent of Russian expansion into Transcaucasia, must have heard of Emin's and Shahamirean's efforts. In 1785 he began corresponding with Shahamirean.⁵ By 1787 Shahamirean wrote letters to Kat'oghikos Ghukas and King Erekle.⁶ The correspon-

¹See document 407.

²The above information is from Emin's autobiography, J. Emin, *The Life and Adventures of Joseph Ēmin, An Armenian*, 2 vols. London, 1792, reprinted Calcutta, 1918.

³*Nor tetrak or koch'i hordorak* [New Booklet Called Exhortation] (Madras, 1772).

⁴*Girk anvanial orogayt parats'.*

⁵See documents 381, 382, and 386.

⁶See document 390.

dence with, as well as financial contributions to the Armenians in Russia and Transcaucasia, continued until Shahamirean's death in 1797.¹

Documents on the Armenian Churches in Russia

In 1666 forty Persian Armenians petitioned Tsar Alexei to permit them to use Russian churches in Astrakhan and Kazan for prayers and Russian priests to bury those who had died in Russia. They stated that although they were as Christian as any Russian and had their own churches in Persia, Turkey, India, and Europe they were denied entrance to Russian churches and Russian priests refused to come to their deathbed. Hence, if an Armenian merchant fell ill, they could not call a Russian priest and died without receiving the last rites and lost their souls.²

At the start of the eighteenth century, Peter the Great permitted the Armenians to erect a small wooden church in Astrakhan. In 1706 a stone church was built on that site. In 1714 Minas Vardapet suggested that Russia construct an Armenian church in St. Petersburg.³ As the Armenian population of the Astrakhan province grew,⁴ Empress Anna (1730-1740), in 1737, permitted the construction of another Armenian church there. A wooden structure was begun and soon a number of services were conducted in the yet unfinished church.⁵

In 1739, the wealthy merchant, Luke Shirvanov, petitioned Empress Anna to permit the construction of a small Armenian church on the land he owned in St. Petersburg. Anna, whose court and administration had numerous Germans, had granted Lutherans permission to have their own churches in St. Petersburg and Moscow. Anna granted the permission and a year later the Senate and the Holy Synod affixed their seals to the project.⁶ Early in 1740, Bogdan Khristoforov, a prominent merchant in Moscow asked the empress to permit the construction of an Armenian

¹See document 429.

²See document 7.

³See document 76.

⁴Not only the Armenian and Armeno-Georgian squadrons settled in that province, but Armenian refugees from Georgia, Karabagh, Ganja and Shirvan also moved there.

⁵See document 139.

⁶See document 206.

church in the *Kitai-gorod* section of the city. Permission was granted a few months later.¹

None of these churches were constructed. The reign of Empress Elizabeth (1741-1762) changed everything. She not only replaced the German officials with Russians, but also sought to stop all non-Orthodox religious activities in Russia. One of her earliest decrees was to convert the Lutheran churches in the Ukraine to Russian Orthodox churches.² She also asked the Holy Synod to "inform Us immediately where in Our Realm are they currently constructing Armenian churches and on whose order."³ After receiving the Synod's report on December 1741, Elizabeth, on 16 January 1742, decreed that the construction permits for the Armenian churches in St. Petersburg and Moscow be cancelled and that the construction of the second church in Astrakhan be halted.⁴ Despite petitions from the Armenian bishop of Astrakhan, the wooden structure was demolished in May.⁵ Ten years later Armenian merchants from Moscow and St. Petersburg once again petitioned the government to permit the construction of Armenian churches in their respective cities. They stated that such structures would attract more Armenian traders and bring more capital to Russia. They added that even Muslims had more houses of worship, while the stone church in Astrakhan remained the sole Armenian church in Russia, despite the large number of Armenians living in Russia.⁶ Although the Senate and the Collegium of Foreign Affairs gave their permission, no official decree came from Elizabeth.⁷

Catherine the Great completely reversed Elizabeth's intolerance. Her enlightened and tolerant policies brought economic prosperity and religious freedom for the Armenians living in Russia. A few months after her ascension to the throne, Catherine issued a decree, which permitted all her non-Orthodox subjects, except the Jews, to build their own houses of worship. The previous petitions of the Armenians of Astrakhan, Moscow, and St. Petersburg now received positive responses from the monarch.⁸ A decade later, Armenians had a second church in Astrakhan, a

¹See document 211, note 3.

²See document 211.

³*Ibid.*

⁴See document 213.

⁵*Ibid.*, note 2.

⁶See document 250.

⁷*Ibid.*, note 4.

⁸See document 272.

church in Moscow, and a large church on Nevskii Prospect in St. Petersburg.¹ Ten years later, Catherine permitted the Armenian immigrants from the Crimea to construct a large church in New Nakhichevan.² By the end of the century an Armenian church was also constructed in Grigoriopol', for the Armenian immigrants from Moldavia,³ and smaller houses of worship as well as Armenian cemeteries had opened in Moscow, St. Petersburg, Astrakhan, and New Nakhichevan.⁴

Documents on Armenian Conversions to the Orthodox Faith

One of the earliest documents in the Russian archives deals with an Armenian convert seeking financial aid.⁵ Armenian conversions during the first three-quarters of the seventeenth century were motivated by financial gain.⁶ Following the 1673 trade agreement such conversions, for obvious reasons, diminished considerably. During the first four decades of the eighteenth century, a handful of Armenians from Europe, who settled in Russia at the invitation of Peter the Great, converted to the Orthodox faith. Others, most of them Armenians from Transcaucasia, converted upon joining the Armenian and Armeno-Georgian Squadrons, as well as Russian army, as officers.⁷ One of the few exceptions to this that we know of was the conversion of Minas Vardapet, who converted just prior to his death in 1740.⁸

The political changes during the reign of Elizabeth encouraged more conversions. A decree issued on 30 June 1742 ordered the expulsion of the Armenian priest from the Georgian Regiment. The Armenians serving in that regiment should... "be strongly and carefully coached to con-

¹See document 291. It is important to note that unlike the churches in Astrakhan, the Armenian churches in the two main cities of Russia, especially the church in St. Petersburg, were designed in a European fashion.

²See document 303.

³See document 403.

⁴See document 396.

⁵See document 2.

⁶See documents 3, 11.

⁷For example Aivaz Avramov, Lazar Khristoforov, the Kuzanov brothers and others, also see document 262. Some Armenians completely changed their names, while others Russianized them.

⁸See document 176. The reason was probably because Minas was destitute and hoped to receive the pension due him.

vert to the Orthodox faith. Those Armenian heretics who express a desire to convert should be taken by the regimental priest to an Orthodox church and be converted."¹ There is documentary evidence that Armenian emigrating from Muslim regions, as well as Transcaucasia began to convert in larger numbers. It is important to add, however, that most of these converts sought positions in the Russian military units.² There is no accurate estimate of the total number of Armenians who converted to Russian Orthodoxy during the period under discussion. The numbers could not have been significant, for there are no signs of alarm on the part of the hierarchy of the Armenian Church.

Documents on the Relations of the Armenian Church with Russia

A large number of documents in this study deal with the correspondence of Armenian Church leaders with Russian monarchs and officials. The absence of an Armenian state, as well as the Ottoman and Persian practice of grouping their non-Muslim subjects into separate communities administered by their religious leaders, left the Armenian Church as the main representative of its people.

There were six different hierarchies within the Armenian Church in the period under discussion: The kat'oghikosate of All Armenians at the Mother See of Ējmiatsin; the kat'oghikosate of Aghuank' at the See of Gandzasar; the kat'oghikosate at Aght'amar in Van; the kat'oghikosate of Cilicia in Sis; the patriarchate of Jerusalem; and the patriarchate of Constantinople. The first two, as well as the last, played distinct roles in the events highlighted in this study. The Persian Armenian community had a great influence in electing the kat'oghikos at Ējmiatsin until the death of Kat'oghikos Astuatsatur of Hamadan in 1725. The Mother Church was within the Persian empire and the Persian Armenian group had a strong representation within the brotherhood of Ējmiatsin. After the Ottoman conquest of eastern Armenia in 1724, the Turkish Armenian candidates began to fill the position of supreme patriarch of the Armenian Church. Even after the Turks were expelled in 1735, candidates from the Ottoman empire dominated the kat'oghikosate of Ējmiatsin until the end of the eighteenth century.³

¹See document 215.

²See documents, 229, 247, 259, and 262.

³See appendix.

Naturally, there were conflicts among the different Armenian religious centers. The Church's authority and administrative unity was constantly challenged by rivalries, superstition, and corruption. The Persian Armenian party in the Holy See would not fully accept the choice of the Armenians from Constantinople, while the Turkish Armenians would suspect any Persian Armenian candidate. Documents in the Russian archives, however, deal primarily with the rivalry of Ējmiatsin and Gandzasar.

The moment the Persian Armenian merchants obtained their favorable trade agreements with Russia, both kat'oghikoses wrote to Tsar Alexei to inform him of their leadership over the Armenians. While Kat'oghikos Hakob of Julfa (1655-1680) sought aid from Russia against the Muslims, Kat'oghikos Petros III (1653-1675) of Gandzasar introduced himself as the successor of Gregory the Illuminator and the holder of the holy relics of St. John the Baptist, Gregory the Illuminator, and Joseph of Arimathea.¹

The activities of Israel Ori and his supporters in Karabagh signaled the beginning of bitter rivalry between the two Sees at the start of the eighteenth century. The rivalry was primarily between the Hasan-Jalalean kat'oghikoses of Gandzasar and the Supreme Patriarch of All Armenians at Ējmiatsin. The Hasan-Jalaleans were an Armenian princely family from Karabagh who at the end of the fourteenth century, became the hereditary kat'oghikoses of the Armenians living in what used to be known as Caucasian Albania (Aghuank'). According to tradition, Gregory the Illuminator brought Christianity to that region after he had converted Armenia. Although the region possessed its own religious hierarchy from ancient times, it was subordinate to Ējmiatsin.

Despite the fact that from 485 the Holy See of Armenia left Ējmiatsin for various locations, it remained within the boundaries of historic Armenia until the eleventh century. From the eleventh century until the mid-fifteenth century, however, the center of the Armenian Church was located in Asia Minor and Cilicia. Local bishops, therefore, began to exert considerable power in their monasteries in Aght'amar, Gandzasar, Tat'ew, Gladzor, Haghpat and Sanahin. In 1441, the Holy See returned to Ējmiatsin, thanks to the efforts of a Hasan-Jalaeian military commander in the service of the Qara Qoyunlu.² Shortly after another member of the family, Grigor X Jalal-bēgeants', who probably was the head of

¹See documents 16, 19.

²For details see Bournoutian, *Khanate of Erevan*, pp. 71-72.

the Church of Aghuank', became the kat'oghikos at Ējmiatsin (1443-1465). After his death, the Hasan-Jalaleans continued their leadership of the Church of Aghuank' and became firmly established in the monastery of Gandzasar.

Esayi Hasan-Jalalean (1702-1728) fired the first salvo. Upon assuming his post, he immediately sent a letter to the Armenians of Astrakhan and Moscow informing them that he and not the kat'oghikos of Ējmiatsin was responsible for their welfare.¹ While Kat'oghikos Nahapet at Ējmiatsin refused to embrace Israel Ori's plans and gave cautious response to overtures from Russia,² Esayi welcomed both Ori's plans and Russian contacts.³ The next patriarch at Ējmiatsin, Kat'oghikos Aghek'sandr (1706-1714) tried to repair the damage by sending conciliatory messages to Peter,⁴ and by appointing a prelate, Bishop Hovakim, to oversee the Armenians of Russia.⁵

The rivalry intensified when Esayi, taking advantage of Hovakim's absence from Russia,⁶ made Minas Vardapet an archbishop and appointed him, in 1716, as the prelate of the Armenians in Russia.⁷ Although Kat'oghikos Astuatsatur (1715-1725) immediately informed the Armenians of Russia that Minas had presented himself at Ējmiatsin and had pledged allegiance to the Mother Church, Esayi was viewed by the Russians as being their loyal friend. Esayi's and Minas' correspondence with Peter the Great makes it appear as if they represented the Armenian people.⁸ Their correspondence with each other completely ignores the leadership at Ējmiatsin.⁹ The situation worsened when Minas accused Hovakim, upon his return from Europe, of being a spy and had him arrested, in 1718, by the Russians. Two years later, Hovakim died in a Kazan jail and the rift between the two Sees widened. Finally, Minas and Esayi accused the Ējmiatsin hierarchy of being untrustworthy, that is, friends of the Muslims and enemies of Russia.¹⁰ The Russian government, therefore,

¹See document 51.

²See document 64.

³See document 76.

⁴See document 85.

⁵See document 88, note 4.

⁶He left for Europe and was held a prisoner in Rome.

⁷See document 80.

⁸See documents 81, 82, 85, and 87.

⁹See documents 86, 95.

¹⁰See documents 94, 95.

accepted Minas and Esayi as the main religious leaders of the Armenians in Russia and Transcaucasia respectively.¹ The Armenian Archbishop of Tiflis was soon sending reports to Minas as well.²

The fall of Isfahan, civil war in Persia, the occupation of Ējmiatsin by the Turks, as well as the armed resistance of the Armenians in Georgia, Ganja, Karabagh, and Ghap'an, prompted the kat'oghikoses at Gandzasar to extend their authority even further. It is interesting to note that even the so-called anti-kat'oghikoses, that is archbishops not belonging to the Hasan-Jalaleans, who assumed the title of kat'oghikos at The Three Youths Monastery in Karabagh,³ ignored Ējmiatsin and sent their own messages to Russia.⁴ By the end of the reign of Peter the Great, Russian officials totally disregarded Ējmiatsin and Peter's successor, Catherine I addressed Esayi and Nersēs as the sole representatives of the Armenians in Transcaucasia.⁵

Following the death of Esayi and the end of the Armenian resistance in Transcaucasia, as well as the Russian and Turkish withdrawal from parts of Persia, Ējmiatsin began to reassert its position. Kat'oghikos Abraham II (1730-1734) of Ējmiatsin dispatched a vardapet to distribute Holy Oil to the Armenians in Astrakhan.⁶ The death of Minas and the policies of Elizabeth destroyed much of Gandzasar's power over the Armenians of Russia. In 1750 Kat'oghikos Ghazar (1737-1751) of Ējmiatsin sent a letter to the Armenians of Astrakhan stating that Gandzasar's original role was to oversee the Armenians of Caucasian Albania and no others. He asked them to remain loyal only to Ējmiatsin.⁷ During the next decade Ējmiatsin began to once again correspond with the Russian government and slowly reasserted its position as the religious center of Transcaucasian Armenians.⁸

¹See documents 91, 102, 103, 104, 106 and 110.

²See document 105.

³Simēon IV (1675-1701), Nersēs V (1728?-1763), and Israyēl (1763-1765). The first two men assumed the title of kat'oghikos, when the See of Gandzasar was vacant. Ebrāhīm Khan of Shushi installed the third in his attempt to dislodge the Hasan-Jalaleans.

⁴See document 108.

⁵See document 148.

⁶See document 174.

⁷See document 241.

⁸See document 264.

Ējmiatsin's claim as the only Holy See was re-established during the reign of Catherine the Great. The first step was to create a solid bond between Ējmiatsin and the most powerful leader in the region, King Erekle II of Georgia.¹ Second was the sending of reliable information on the region to Catherine's commanders, who were planning major wars against the Ottoman empire.² The kat'oghikos who began this process was Simēon of Erevan (1763-1780). Simēon was a conservative and cautious patriarch. His correspondence with Catherine the Great³ restored Ējmiatsin's right to represent the Armenians of Russia. Meanwhile, he remained loyal to the Persians and did not personally encourage Armenian armed resistance.⁴

In 1769 Simēon was informed of yet another plan for the liberation of Armenia. The project was outlined by Moses Sarafov (Movsēs Sarafean), an Armenian merchant from Moscow. Since Russia was at war with Turkey (1768-1774), Sarafov proposed to extend the war into the Asiatic side and liberate Armenia with the help of the Christians of Transcaucasia.⁵ As the Russo-Turkish war was coming to an end, Simēon was informed that Russia had not only major plans for the settlement of Armenians from the Crimea in Russia, but was also interested in the protection of Christians under Turkish rule. Therefore, in 1773, Simēon appointed Archbishop Hovsēp' Argutinskii as the prelate of the Armenians in Russia.⁶ Argutinskii was an ardent supporter of Russian expansion into Transcaucasia and a major exponent of the Russian orientation among his people. Soon he complained that the Holy See was too cautious in their relations with Russia.⁷ To safeguard their position vis-à-vis the Persians, both Simēon and his successor Ghukas (1780-1799) detached themselves from the actions of Argutinskii. The archbishop, for all intents and purposes, operated independently from Ējmiatsin. It was

¹See document 279.

²See document 282.

³See documents 284, 286.

⁴He even burned copies of the booklet called *Exhortation* and chastised its authors.

⁵See document 289. Some years later, Argutinskii adopted Sarafov's plan.

⁶See document 295. Kat'oghikos Ghukas (1780-1799) re-appointed Argutinskii as the prelate of the Armenians in Russia, see document 321.

⁷See documents 373, 386.

Argutinskii and not the *kat'oghikos*, who insisted that Russia forbid Catholic missionaries from converting Armenians.¹

Argutinskii's close connections to the imperial family and to the Russian aristocracy soon bore fruit. In 1779, Catherine told the Armenian clerics from the Crimea that they had to be subordinate to *Ējmiatsin*.² In 1780 she asked Argutinskii to establish a new town for the Armenians from the Crimea. The town of New Nakhichevan, next to Rostov on the Don, became an important Armenian center.³ Soon after Catherine ordered that no Armenian priest from Persia, Georgia or Turkey could enter Russia without permission from *Ējmiatsin*.⁴ Argutinskii's personal friendship with the Potemkin brothers and Suvorov prepared the way for what he hoped would be the liberation of historic Armenia by Russia.⁵ His efforts intensified after the Treaty of Georgievsk.⁶ Hovhannēs Hasan-Jalalean of Gandzasar (1763-1786), the Armenian meliks, the Armenians in Erevan and Tiflis, and the Russian military and administration now looked to Argutinskii as the sole spokesman for the Armenians in Transcaucasia.

Argutinskii corresponded with the Lazareans of Moscow and St. Petersburg,⁷ King Erekle II,⁸ Shahamir Shahamirian of India,⁹ and with every noted Russian military and state official.¹⁰ The death of Hovhannēs Hasan-Jalalean at the hands of Ebrāhīm Khan of Shushi,¹¹ left Gandzasar without a leader for eight years¹² and made Argutinskii the unofficial

¹See document 311.

²See documents 305, 313.

³See documents 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 313, and 316.

⁴See documents 312, 316.

⁵See documents 326, 327, 328, 332, 333, 343, and 349.

⁶See document 347.

⁷See document 374.

⁸See document 436.

⁹See documents 381, 382, and 386.

¹⁰See documents 383, 400, 401, 406, 407, 409, 414, 425, 427, 431, 432, 433, and 440.

¹¹See document 396.

¹²The last *kat'oghikos* of Gandzasar was Sargis Hasan-Jalalean (1810-1815). In 1792, he assumed the title of *kat'oghikos*, but soon relinquished it due to threats from Ebrāhīm Khan, who had killed his predecessor. Simēon V (1794-1810) was named *kat'oghikos*. Sargis remained under house arrest and finally fled to Haghpāt in 1799. He returned to Gandzasar in 1806 (after the death of Ebrāhīm Khan at the hands of the Russians) and was recognized as *kat'oghikos*

leader of the Armenians of Karabagh as well. In 1791 Prince Potemkin put Argutinskii in charge of the building of the town of Grigoriopol' for the Armenian refugees from Moldavia and Bessarabia.¹ Argutinskii accompanied the Russia army during the invasion of Transcaucasia in 1796² and could almost taste the fruit of his labor,³ when Catherine's death halted the Russian advance at the Kura River at the beginning of 1797. He did not give up hope and was instrumental in convincing Tsar Paul to reassess his policy regarding Transcaucasia. After the death of Ghukas in 1799, Argutinskii was, following immense pressure from Russia, elected the kat'oghikos of Ējmiatsin in 1800.⁴

Documents on Armenian Military Activities in Karabagh and Ghap'an (1722-1730)

The Armenian resistance to the Ottoman invasion of eastern Armenia, and the heroic uprising in Karabagh and Ghap'an have been subjects of a number of short essay, novels, and articles. Aside from their one-sided viewpoint, none have managed to present a thorough explanation of the complicated events, which unfolded rapidly and set off a chain reaction that no one could predict or control. The documents introduced in this study, present some interesting and new information, and will, I hope, help historians put the 1722-1730 period into a wider historical perspective.

Following the death of Israel Ori, Armenian leaders led by Kat'oghikos Esayi and Minas Vardapet continued to petition Peter the Great to send troops to Transcaucasia. They hoped to complete the work started by Ori and to free the Armenian population from Muslim rule.⁵ Peter had not forgotten his promise to Ori and was still interested in

in 1810, after the death of Simēon. Five years later, the Russians, under pressure from Ējmiatsin abolished the kat'oghikosate of Aghuank'.

¹See documents 397, 399, 400, 401, 402, 403, 405, and 406.

²See documents 423, 425, 427, 430, 431, and 432.

³See documents 436, 440.

⁴He died in Tiflis in 1801 on his way to Ējmiatsin. For details of the Russian involvement in the affairs of the Armenian Church during the 19th century, as well as Argutinskii's election and his efforts to revive the Russian commitment to the Armenians see Bournoutian, *Russia and the Armenians*, pp. 15-60, 456-461.

⁵See documents 76, 81, and 82.

exploring the possibility of Russian expansion into Transcaucasia. In 1715 he dispatched Artemii Volynskii to Isfahan. Peter's specific and lengthy instructions to Volynskii clearly indicate his plans for a future campaign in the Caspian littoral.¹ For the next seven years Peter maintained a correspondence with Minas and Esayi, who continually supplied him with information about the conditions in Persia and Transcaucasia.²

The Afghan invasion of Persia prompted Wakhtang VI, who had been reinstated as king of K'art'li by the Persians in 1719 after his nominal conversion to Islam,³ to seek an alliance with Russia.⁴ Having concluded his war with Sweden, Peter, using the murder of some Russian merchants in Shemakhi as a pretext, finally ordered the Russian forces to leave Astrakhan (August 1722) and move south along the Caspian coast. Minas Vardapet and a number of Armenian volunteers from Russia, Shemakhi, Persia, and Georgia gradually joined the Russians and were instrumental in the formation of the future Armenian and Armeno-Georgian Squadrons.⁵ It is important to note that Peter announced that his sole purpose was to restore order in Persia and re-establish safe routes for Russian and Armenian merchants.⁶

The Russian move prompted King Wakhtang to gather a large Armeno-Georgian force⁷ and march to Ganja to unite with the Russian army, which was supposed to come from Shemakhi.⁸ Armed Armenians from Karabagh, Ghap'an, and even Erevan accompanied by Kat'oghikos Esayi,⁹ joined Wakhtang's army in Ganja.¹⁰ After taking Derbent, the Russians did not move inland as expected. Rather, they continued along the Caspian shores to Baku, Enzeli, and Rasht, completely bypassing eastern Armenia and eastern Georgia.

¹See document 77.

²See documents 85, 86, 87, 94, and 95.

³He took the name of Hosein Qolī Khan.

⁴See document 96.

⁵See documents relating to the Armenian Squadron in the commentary.

⁶See documents 98, 99, and 101.

⁷According to reports from Minas Vardapet the force totaled 30,000 Georgians and 20,000 Armenians, see documents 102, 104.

⁸See document 98.

⁹See document 102.

¹⁰Minas Vardapet's reports cite 8000 to 10,000 men, see documents 104, 106.

The Ottomans rattled by the presence of the Russian army so near their eastern borders, began massing troops along the Georgian frontier.¹ They found an ally in Constantine II, the ruler of Kakhet'i, who had converted to Islam² and who wished to rule over all of eastern Georgia.³ When he and his Lesghian allies threatened Tiflis, Wakhtang returned to his capital.⁴ Meanwhile, the elder son of the Shah, Prince Taḥmāsp, escaped from Isfahan and began gathering an army in the north. He asked Wakhtang, as a vassal of Persia, to join him with his army.⁵ Wakhtang feared leaving his capital unprotected from attacks by Constantine, the Lesghians, or the Ottomans, and refused.⁶ Hoping that the arrival of the Russians would not only guarantee the safety of his domain, but would also make him the sole ruler of all of Georgia.

Despite urgent appeals from Wakhtang, Peter did not send troops to Georgia.⁷ He hoped to keep the Ottomans out of Transcaucasia and Persia by agreeing not to campaign in Georgia, Ganja or Shirvan.⁸ The Turks ignored Peter's assurances, gathered their troops at the border and invaded Georgia.⁹ Wakhtang, who had been keeping the Lesghians at bay, was now forced to leave his capital and Tiflis opened its gates to the Ottomans in June 1723. Wakhtang, who had taken refuge in northwestern Georgia, continued to hope for the arrival of the Russians.

The Afghan occupation of Isfahan in the meantime, prompted local Persian and Kurdish khans to strengthen their control over Armenian-populated districts in Azerbaijan, Erevan, Nakhichevan, Karabagh and Ghap'an. Prince Taḥmāsp also demanded large sums from the Armenians, especially the Ghap'anis, to pay for his military buildup against the Afghans. Bolstered by the hope of the imminent arrival of the Russians, various groups of armed Armenians fought back against the Persians.¹⁰ Taḥmāsp and his khans, already apprehensive about the Russian inva-

¹See document 111.

²He took the name of Moḥammad Qolī Khan.

³See document 101.

⁴See documents 105, 113.

⁵See document 101.

⁶See documents 101, 102.

⁷See document 101.

⁸See documents 111, 113.

⁹See document 120.

¹⁰See document 396.

sion, viewed the action of the Christian Armenians as a rebellion and retaliated.¹

The Turkish incursions into Georgia and the Russian move on Enzeli forced Taḥmāsp to accept Peter's assurances to restore order and to negotiate with the Russians.² The Armenian commanders in Taḥmāsp's army, P'arsadan Bek and Esayi Yüzbaşı also managed to convince the prince to pardon the Armenian so-called rebels and seek their help in restoring order.³ Esayi Yüzbaşı and Peter both asked the Armenian leaders in Karabagh to desist from fighting the Persians. Esayi Yüzbaşı's letter written in the spring of 1723 to the Armenian commanders in Karabagh is especially noteworthy. It states:

*The Shah has sent an envoy to Russia...Derbent, Baku, and Gilan would be handed to Russia...There are rumors that Russia has sent a 12,000-man army to take Ganja and that they have already taken Shemakhi. These are not true...I have to tell you that the Georgian [Wakhtang's] promises are also empty...The Ottoman army is numerous. Their promises of peace...are not reliable. Once they arrive there will be no Armenians left. All will be taken prisoner. Be cautious, I shall soon arrive.*⁴

In June 1723 Peter the Great issued his famous proclamation to the Armenian people and sent it with Ivan Karapet to Karabagh and Ghap'an. Peter acknowledged the petitions from Kat'oghikoses Esayi and Nersēs, as well as the meliks of Karabagh. He promised to defend them against the Muslims and put them under his protection. His declaration, however, contained a very important statement ignored by most historians:

*We shall soon be able to help the Armenians and rescue them from the Muslim yoke. If for some reason they cannot defend themselves or Our troops do not reach their lands, We invite them to come to the Caspian towns which are under our control. In the meantime We recommend that they remain quiet until such time when we are able to intervene...*⁵

¹See document 128.

²See document 119. Peter's promises were delivered by Semen Avramov, the Russian consul in Rasht.

³Gilanentz, p. 65.

⁴See document 107.

⁵See document 115.

It is obvious that the Armenians of Georgia, Shemakhi, Ganja, and Karabagh did not even fathom the notion that the Russians would bypass their lands and push on toward Gilan and Mazandaran. Despite warnings from Peter's Privy Council to Minas Pervazeian, the Armenian archbishop of Tiflis,¹ the Armenians were not aware of what lengths was Peter prepared to go to avoid a war with the Ottomans.

The Russo-Persian treaty and the Russian occupation of much of the Caspian region so alarmed the Turks that they almost started a war with Russia. Peter, whose army in the Caspian was experiencing losses from various diseases, was not willing to engage in a major war with the Ottomans. He had not forgotten his defeat at the battle of Pruth and the loss of Azov in 1711. The efforts of the Russian ambassador at Constantinople, Ivan Nepliev, and the French envoy, Marquis de Bonnac, managed to avert war. The resulting Russo-Turkish agreement of 13 June 1724 partitioned Transcaucasia. Russia retained its gains on the western and southern coasts of the Caspian, while the Turks were permitted to occupy eastern Armenia, eastern Georgia and half of Shirvan.² Ironically regions with a Muslim majority became part of the Russian sphere, while the historic Armenian and Georgian lands, populated largely by Christians, fell into Ottoman hands.

The treaty shocked the Georgians, as well as the Armenians of the Ararat region. Realizing that no Russian troops would arrive to his aid, Wakhtang and some 1,200 members of Georgian nobility immigrated to Russia in July 1724. The defenders of Erevan also lost heart and surrendered in September. The Turks then took Hamadan, laid siege to Tabriz and began a two-prong move toward Ghap'an, Karabagh, Ganja, and Shemakhi.³

The full Ottoman invasion of Persia and eastern Armenia completely reshuffled alliances. Facing a dreaded common enemy, Armenians and Persians put aside their past differences and defended Tabriz and Ganja. Having taken Tiflis, Erevan, and Hamadan, the Turks did not expect any resistance, especially in the rest of eastern Armenia.

¹See document 111.

²See document 127.

³For details on the Turkish attacks on Tiflis and Erevan, the Armenian resistance, and the fall of Erevan to the Turks, see Bournoutian's annotated translations of *The Chronicle of Abraham of Crete* (Costa Mesa, 1999) and Abraham of Erevan's *The History of the Wars, 1721-1738* (Costa Mesa, 1999).

The Turks had ignored the fact that the Armenians of Ghap'an and Karabagh had a long tradition of armed resistance. Taking advantage of their mountainous terrain, the feudal lords or meliks of Karabagh, had always defended their autonomy. In fact, following the fall of the Armenian kingdoms, these districts were among the few regions where Armenians continued to have an active political and military leadership. The early Safavids had recognized the autonomy of the region, and Karabagh had become known as the *khamse*,¹ after the five autonomous districts ruled by specific feudal Armenian families.² There were several meliks in Ghap'an as well.

There is evidence that in the first half of the seventeenth century the meliks of Karabagh had a large force of musketeers and supported King T'eimuraz I in his attempts to rid Kakhet'i from the Shah's *vālī*, the Georgian renegade Khorosow Mirza.³ During the second half of the seventeenth century, some of the meliks had taken part in the secret meeting at Ējmiatsin and had dispatched one of their own, Israel Ori to Europe. They had welcomed Ori on his return, had supported his plan to liberate Armenia⁴ and had corresponded with Peter the Great for two decades prior to the Russian invasion of the Caspian littoral.⁵

Documents clearly indicate that the Armenians of Karabagh and Ghap'an possessed plenty of food, iron, copper, lead mines, and made their own weapons, including muskets, sabers, daggers, pistols, and cutlasses.⁶ They did not, however, know how to make gunpowder and did not have cannons.⁷ In addition, as stated, Ori had sent some 20,000 rubles worth of modern European arms to the region in 1707.⁸

¹From the Arabic *kamse* (five).

²The districts were Dizak, Varanda, Khachen, Jraberd, Gulistan (Talesh). They were ruled by the Eganean, Shahnazarean, Hasan-Jalalean/Alahverdean, Haikazean-Israyēlean and Beglarean clans.

³N. T. Nakashidze, *Gruzino-russkie politicheskie otnosheniia v pervoi polovine XVII veka* (Tbilisi, 1968), p. 95. Khosrow Mirza is also known as Rostam Khan, or King Rostom.

⁴See document 40.

⁵See documents 53, 108, and 109.

⁶See documents 118, 162.

⁷See document 162. Thirty Armenians from Ghap'an were executed by the order of Shah Ṭahmāsp when they ventured to purchase gunpowder across the Arax, see document 128.

⁸Ezov, doc. 144.

Although the Armenian resistance in Karabagh and Ghap'an from 1722 to 1730 is viewed as a single movement, the two had, nevertheless, their differences.

During their rebellion against the Persians in 1722, the Armenians of Ghap'an had asked Wakhtang's help. He dispatched Davit' Bek, one of his most able officers, with 2,000 Armenian fighters from Georgia. After Davit' arrived in Ghap'an, he organized its defenses from the fort of Halidzor.¹ Although at first Davit's main enemies were the Persians,² he soon realized that the Turks posed a much greater danger. Following the Turkish conquest of Erevan, the Armenians and Persians of Ghap'an joined forces to resist the Ottomans. One archival source records Davit' Bek as having a total of 6,628 Armenian fighters.³

It is interesting to note that Davit' Bek, a national hero of the Armenians, is mentioned in only a few documents.⁴ There is no correspondence from or to him.⁵ From 1724 until his death he fought the Turkish invaders and managed to drive them away from Meghri and Bargushat. Shah Tahmāsp recognized Davit's contribution and in 1727 named him the ruler of Ghap'an. According to most scholars Davit' died fighting the Turks in 1728; others believe that he died in 1726. They cite a letter dated 24 March 1726, written by the fighters in Ghap'an to Catherine I, which is signed solely by Mkhitar Bek, Davit's lieutenant.⁶ It is of course possible that Davit' was campaigning and could not sign the letter. In any case Mkhitar was killed in 1727 and no other leader is mentioned in Ghap'an after 1728. Despite all their efforts the Turks could not conquer Ghap'an; it remained under Armenian control until Nāder expelled the Turks in 1735.

The Armenians of Karabagh and Ganja gathered a large fighting force composed mainly of local inhabitants. Armenians from Shemakhi and Armenian soldiers from the armies of Georgia and Persia soon bolstered their numbers. The Armenian forces in Karabagh started with 12,000

¹AVPR, Coll. 100 (1725), file 2, f. 6.

²See document 128.

³MAAC, MS. no. 3297, ff. 68-69.

⁴See documents 129, 396 and a letter from Ivan Karapet to Peter Tolstoi dated 11 May 1725 in AVPR, Coll. 100 (1725), file 2, f. 6.

⁵The information about him comes primarily from Ghukas Sebastats'i's *Davit' Bek kam Petmut'iwn Ghap'ants'wots'* (Venice 1978).

⁶See document 149.

men¹ and increased to 40,000 men by 1724.² The Armenian resistance in Karabagh was concentrated in three main *seghnaghs*³ or fortified places. The first was in the fort of Shushi, the second in Barda, and the third in Ganja.⁴ Smaller *seghnaghs* existed in other locations in the highlands of Karabagh. Some of these were caves on the top of ravines, the defenders and their families hoisted by ropes into the openings. They were well provisioned and armed. A number of Armenian captains, or *yüzbaşıs*, commanded these *seghnaghs*. The most noted among them were named Avan, Bagi, Abraham, Egan, Esayi, T'arkhan, and Avak.⁵

The main leader of the Armenian resistance in Karabagh was Avan Yüzbaşı. His family was from Lori and he is said to have moved from Shemakhi to Shushi. Between 1717 and 1722 he assembled a force and built a *seghnagh* on top of Shushi. In 1722 he was among those who went to Ganja to welcome the Russian army. Documents indicate that from 1723 until the end of 1728 Avan commanded the combined forces of the Armenians from Karabagh.⁶ In 1724 he and 200 of his men went to Ghap'an to help Davit' Bek.⁷ In 1725 Avan fought the Turks in Ganja and

¹See documents 109, 110.

²See document 123. Documents indicate that the Armenian army fluctuated from 30,000 and 50,000 men between 1722 and 1724, see documents 102, 104; *Ezov*, doc. 213; *AVPR*, Coll. 100 (1723), file 2, ff. 30-31; *ibid.*, (1724), file 2, ff. 26-29. It is very difficult to accurately estimate the number of armed Armenians in the region. According to Minas Vardapet the entire Armenian population of eastern Armenia was about 200,000, see document 85. Such a number is too low and probably refers only to the male population, for women were not counted in the tax rolls. The population probably exceeded 500,000. Therefore, there must have been at least 10,000 adult males, which could muster an army of some 30,000. We know that Armenians from Georgia, Russia, Poland, and Persia joined them. Thus, although local sources tend to exaggerate their military strength, 50,000 is not an improbable number. The large Turkish losses from 1723 to 1728 (approximately 40,000 according to various sources, see below) also indicate the presence of a large Armenian fighting force.

³The exact Armenian spelling is *sghnagh* or *sghnakh*. The term derives from the Turkish *seğnakh* or *siğnak* from *siğınmak* meaning shelter or refuge. Persian documents spell it *saqnāq* and Russian sources, *signak* or *signakh*.

⁴*Gilanentz*, pp. 71-72. In 1723 Peter the great acknowledged the leaders of the four *seghnaghs*, see document 115.

⁵See documents 107, 110, 130, 133, 134, 135, 139, 153, 159, 161, 162, 164, 167, 169, 173, 177, and 207.

⁶See documents 122, 124, 135, 144, 148, and 159.

⁷See document 130.

although the city fell, the Armenian *seghnagh* held out. Avan and the other meliks resisted Turkish moves into the highlands of Karabagh.¹ Shah Tahmāsp even made Avan a khan and recognized him as the commander-in-chief of Karabagh. The heroic defense of the Armenians of Karabagh inspired twenty-three Armenians from Poland to travel to the *seghnaghs* and join the Armenians of Karabagh.²

The deaths of Mkhit'ar Sparapet, Davit' Bek, and Kat'oghikos Esayi and the arrival of large Turkish reinforcements forced the Armenians to hide out in their *seghnaghs*. Several of their forts were taken, and a few even accepted Turkish suzerainty.³ By spring 1726 the Ottomans had taken Shemakhi and Tabriz and, except for a dozen *seghnaghs*, were the masters of Eastern Armenia.⁴

Meanwhile, despite the Russo-Turkish agreement, the Armenians of Karabagh and Russia did not lose hope. For the next four years, they relentlessly continued to petition Peter the Great, Catherine I, and Peter II to send Russian troops to Karabagh.⁵ Avan Yüzbaşı and Minas Vardapet were especially adamant. Minas stated:

*The Armenians have put all their faith in His Majesty's promises. They believe in His words as if they were in the Holy Bible.*⁶

Peter responded that the meliks and their families were welcome to relocate to the Persian lands along the Caspian Sea under Russian control. He promised that they would receive all the necessary assistance the moment they arrived.⁷ The Tsar ordered his commandants in the Caspian region to help the Armenians find suitable land and to protect them from harm.⁸

In 1727, Avan Yüzbaşı, accompanied by other commanders went to Rasht to personally beg General Dolgorukov to cross into Karabagh with his army.⁹ The embarrassed commander asked them to stay a while until he received instructions for St. Petersburg.¹⁰ Tired of waiting Avan, in

¹See document 153.

²See documents 158, 169.

³See documents 146, 149.

⁴See document 150.

⁵See documents 131, 133, 134, 137, 139, 143, 144, 146, 150, and 153.

⁶See document 131.

⁷See document 135.

⁸See document 136.

⁹There were Armenian volunteers in the general's army as well.

¹⁰See document 153.

1728, left went to Baku to present the plight of the Armenians to General Rumiantsev. Rumiantsev's report clearly indicates that some Russian officials were fed up with Armenian petitions.¹ Dolgorukov and Rumiantsev felt that the Armenians were not good fighters and that they were endangering friendly relations with the Porte.²

Avan did not give up, however. In 1729, he sent his brother T'arkhan to St. Petersburg to present the Armenian case to the Imperial court.³ Avan also wrote to King Wakhtang VI, who was in Russia, to convince Peter II to help the defenders of Karabagh.⁴ Avan insisted that since the Daghestanis, sponsored by the Ottomans, were invading Russian territories, Russia could dispatch troops to Karabagh. This would not violate the Russo-Turkish treaty, but was a matter of self-defense.⁵ Although Peter II permitted two dozen Armenians from Poland to go and assist the struggle in Karabagh,⁶ Russia did wish to risk an armed Ottoman reprisal.⁷ As far as Russia was concerned the Persian adventure was over.⁸

Avan, T'arkhan and some of their followers could not return to their homes. They settled in Astrakhan and joined the Armenian Squadron. They received ranks and salaries. Avan, in particular, was given the title of khan and a large salary.⁹ After his death in Astrakhan in 1735, his mother and son remained in the squadron and continued to collect Avan's salary.¹⁰

Yüzbaşı Abraham and Bagi, together with others remained in Karabagh and continued their limited resistance against the Turks. Following the expulsion of the Afghans, they received recognition from Shah Tahmāsp.¹¹ Their war on the Turks continued and so angered Sultan Ah-

¹See document 159.

²See documents 154, 159.

³See document 162.

⁴*Ibid.*, note 5.

⁵See document 159.

⁶See documents 157, 158.

⁷See document 165.

⁸Russia accepted the *status quo* when it came to terms with the Afghan ruler of Persia, see document 160.

⁹He was initially given 150 rubles, which was increased to 200 rubles per annum; the second highest salary paid to an officer in the Armenian and Armenian Squadron, see documents 159, 192.

¹⁰See document 210.

¹¹See document 164.

met III that he sent writs demanding the capture and death of Abraham and the destruction of all the *seghnaghs*.¹ In the summer of 1730, the Turks finally complained to the Russian ambassador in Constantinople that his government was supporting Abraham and his fellow officers. As evidence, they presented a Russian passport granted to Abraham, which they had captured in a raid on his *seghnagh*. Ambassador Nepliuev replied that although a small group of Armenians were given travel permits to come to Russia during the reign of Peter II, they had not received any aid. Russia was strictly observing the peace treaty signed with the Porte. Meanwhile, he added, the Shamkhal of Tarku,² an enemy of Russia, was in Constantinople seeking aid against Russia.³

By 1731, most of the noted Armenian *yüzbaşıs* and their followers had left Karabagh and had settled in Russia.⁴ The decade-long heroic resistance of the Armenians of Karabagh and Ghap'an was not forgotten, however. It remained in the minds of Armenians secular and religious leaders in Russia, India, and eastern Armenia. Despite overwhelming odds, much of Karabagh and Ghap'an never surrendered. By the time Nāder recovered eastern Armenia from the Ottomans some 40,000 Turks had died trying to take the *seghnaghs* in Karabagh, Ganja, and Ghap'an.⁵

When Empress Anna ascended the throne, her German councilors, particularly Ostermann and Münnich, strongly advised her to end the Russian occupation of the Caspian littoral. They pointed out that disease had claimed more Russian troops than the various wars in the region. Meanwhile the emergence of Nāder had calmed Russian fears about Turkish expansion in Asia. In 1732 Russia concluded the treaty of Rasht which renounced the Russian conquests of Gilan, Mazandaran, and Astarabad.⁶ The Russians also sent artillery and officers to aid Nāder expel the Turks from Persia and Transcaucasia. In 1735, on the eve of the Persian

¹See documents 163, 164, and 170.

²The Shamkhal of Tarku controlled the region between Derbent and Astrakhan. He refused to accept Russian suzerainty and was periodically courted by the Ottomans.

³See document 167.

⁴See documents 169, 177, 183, 186, 188, 192, 207, and 208.

⁵See documents 120, 139, 144, 149, 153; AVPR, Coll. 100 (1725) file 1, ff. 27-28, file 2, ff. 1-3; file 4, ff. 41-42, 45; file 5, f. 31, file 8, f. 8; (1727), file 1, ff. 5-7; (1739), file 2, ff. 41, 49; *Hanway*, II, 252.

⁶See document 172.

victory over the Turks, Anna signed the treaty of Ganja and Russia surrendered the remaining regions conquered by Peter the Great in 1722-1723.¹

The disappointed Armenians had another surprise in store for them. The Persians insisted that Armenians who had taken refuge in Russia during the Turko-Afghan invasion be returned to Persia. Merchants and other individuals, who were subjects of Persia, were ordered to return to Baku, Derbent, and Tiflis. Some one hundred and seventy-five families, who had taken refuge in Kizliar, were forcibly sent back.² Armenians who had fought in the Armenian and Armeno-Georgian Squadrons against the Persians in the Caspian region were especially hesitant to return. Although article 7 of the Rasht treaty guaranteed that the Shah would not punish those who had entered the service of Russia, local commanders and officials did not always follow that stipulation.

In 1736 Lazar Khristoforov petitioned Russia to allow him to stay and serve in the Russian army. He stated:

*My family and I cannot return to Persia because we have fought against them in the service of Russia. If I return, the Persians will kill me and cut me to pieces.*³

Another Persian Armenian soldier, Peter Kasparov, who traveled to Persia with an official message, was arrested, tortured and was scheduled to be executed when he escaped. He also begged Empress Anna not to send him back to Persia.⁴ Merchants who had formerly been subjects of Persia or of various khanates in Transcaucasia were harassed and had to pay additional duties.⁵

Documents on the Activities of the Meliks of Karabagh During the Reign of Catherine II

The ten-year struggle against the Muslims had taken its toll in Karabagh. Able commanders were either dead or had immigrated to Russia. The loss of property and the destruction of numerous *seghnaghs* had diminished the military strength of the Armenians. The next dozen years were a period of rebuilding for both Persia and Transcaucasia. Nāder Shah not

¹See document 178.

²See document 181.

³See document 183.

⁴See document 186.

⁵See document 198.

only restored order, but was also favored the Armenians. He invited Kat'oghikos Abraham of Crete to the ceremony celebrating his election as Shah,¹ relocated a number of bothersome Turkish and Kurdish tribes from Karabagh to Khorasan and recognized the meliks as the hereditary rulers of their districts,² and assisted the Armenians during their transfer to New Shemakhi after he destroyed Shemakhi for harboring Lesghians.³

The death of Nāder (1747) began the usual power struggle among various khans and local leaders. This time neither the Ottomans nor the Russians made a move on Persia. Rather individual local leaders consolidated their power and fought each other for supremacy. The most important of these were T'eimuraz II of K'art'li and his son Erekle II, of Kakhet'i, the Afghan Āzād Khan of Azerbaijan, Karīm Khan Zand of Fars, Fath 'Alī Khan Afshar of Kurdistan, Moḥammad Ḥasan Khan Qajar of Mazandaran and Astarabad, and Panāh Khan and his son Ebrāhīm Khan of Karabagh.

Both T'eimuraz and Erekle had served Nāder well during his Indian campaign. As a reward the Shah, in 1744, appointed T'eimuraz, who had married the daughter of King Wakhtang VI, the last king of K'art'li, as the *vali* of K'art'li. Erekle was appointed as the *vali* of Kakhet'i. Eastern Georgia was now ruled by one family, the Bagratids. Shortly after Nāder's death, the father and son began to expand their power southward. Erevan and Ganja, with their large Armenian population, soon fell under the control of the Georgian monarchs. A coalition of khans from Shakki, Shirvan, and Derbent as well as Lesghians and Avars from Daghestan, who feared the rise of a Christian power in the region, kept T'eimuraz and Erekle busy defending their domains, however.

Meanwhile Āzād Khan took Tabriz and in 1751 set his eyes on Erevan.⁴ Although Erekle managed to defeat him, the prospect of fighting on two fronts forced him to come to terms with Āzād Khan. The lands south of the Arax River became subject to Āzād, and the region north of the Arax was left to Erekle. The agreement was sealed when Āzād married a sister of Erekle. Emboldened, Āzād now moved to take Isfahan and make himself Shah. For the next nine years Āzād fought the Afshar, Zand, and Qajar khans, who also wished to become shahs. The four commanders

¹For more details see Bournoutian, *Abraham of Crete*.

²For more details see Bournoutian, *History of Qarabagh*.

³For more details see Bournoutian, *History of the Wars*.

⁴See document 243.

devastated cities and extorted money from their citizens.¹ By 1760 the combined forces of his enemies proved too much: Āzād sought refuge with his brother-in-law Erekle and for the next two years lived comfortably in Tiflis.²

In the meantime, Moḥammad Ḥasan Khan Qajar, dreaming of the crown of Persia, also moved on Isfahan and clashed with Karīm Khan Zand. After a decade of conflict Moḥammad Ḥasan was killed and his son Āḡā Moḥammad Khan was castrated and became a well-treated prisoner of Karīm Khan. After gaining control of Mazandaran and Astarabad, Karīm Khan moved to the northwest. Fath 'Alī Khan Afshar feigned allegiance, but lost his life plotting against Karīm,³ who now became the master of Azerbaijan and Kurdistan, as well. Before returning to his capital at Shiraz, Karīm wished to assure his control of northern Persia and Transcaucasia. He took a number of local khans hostage⁴ and asked Erekle to deliver one of his sons, as well as Āzād Khan. Erekle obliged⁵ and Karīm returned to Shiraz, where he ruled as a benevolent regent (*vakīl*) until his death in 1779.

While these events were transpiring, Panāh Khan who together with his Turkish tribesmen, was exiled from Karabagh to Khorasan by Nāder, returned to Karabagh and after Nāder's death began to expand his power. Together with his son Ebrāhīm, he attacked Shirvan and the Armenian meliks of the five districts of Karabagh. One of the meliks, Melik Shahnazar of Varanda, who had quarreled with his fellow meliks, joined Panāh Khan and helped him built a strong fort in the *seghnagh* of Shushi.⁶ The father and son soon clashed with their Georgian counterparts over the control of Ganja. Realizing their precarious situation vis-à-vis the other khans of Transcaucasia and Karīm Khan, Erekle, as stated, surrendered Āzād Khan, while Ebrāhīm acquiesced his father being a well-treated hostage in Shiraz.⁷ Following the death of T'eimuraz in 1762, Erekle became the king of the united K'art'li-Kakhet'i kingdom (eastern

¹New Julfa had to pay 8,000 *tomans*, see J. Perry, *Karim Khan Zand* (Chicago, 1979), p. 52.

²See documents 259, 270.

³See document 270.

⁴Among them Panāh Khan.

⁵See document 270. To save face Erekle was assured that Āzād's life would be spared. Āzād lived in comfort in Shiraz and died peacefully in 1781.

⁶A daughter of Shahnazar married Panāh Khan's son, Ebrāhīm.

⁷Panāh Khan died in Shiraz in 1766 or 1767.

Georgia). The young leaders of Georgia and Karabagh soon reached an understanding over what constituted their respective zones of influence. As long as the two did not cross the Arax and continued to send gifts to Shiraz, Karīm Khan did not interfere in Transcaucasia.

Erekle's main problem was raids by the Lesghians, which periodically threatened parts of his kingdom. Although Panāh Khan had subdued the meliks to accept an uneasy truce, Ebrāhīm still had to deal with the large Armenian population who inhabited a good part of Karabagh and whose meliks possessed their own forts and armed men. As long as the meliks were cooperative Ebrāhīm left them in peace. True, the thought of a large Christian force in the highlands of Karabagh did not sit well with the khan. He feared their collusion with Erekle or Russia. His fear became even more pronounced when Catherine the Great, the new ruler of Russia, reinstated the expansionist policy of Peter the Great. In order to gain allies, Ebrāhīm married a daughter of Uma Khan of the Avars. However, up to 1783 the meliks and the khan were at peace.

The Russo-Turkish War of 1768-1774 renewed Armenian petitions for the liberation of their homeland from Muslim rule. Prominent Armenian merchants in Russia, who had not forgotten Emin's efforts, spearheaded the movement. In 1769 Moses Sarafov presented an interesting idea to Catherine. He proposed to extend the Russo-Turkish war to the Asiatic front as well. His plan was to unite the Armenians of Russia, Persia and Turkey with the Georgians. Led by Russia such an army, financed by Armenian capital from the diaspora, would liberate Armenia. He suggested that secret messages be sent to the meliks of Karabagh and the Armenian kat'oghikoses in Ējmiatsin and Gandzasar.¹

Meanwhile hoping to bring western Georgia under his rule and restore the golden age of King David the Builder (1089-1125) and Queen T'amar (1184-1213), Erekle began corresponding with Russian generals to send troops into Transcaucasia where he claimed the population would welcome them.²

Russian victories against the Turks prompted Kat'oghikos Simēon, in 1773, to name Archbishop Arghut'ean (Argutinskii) as the new Armenian prelate of the Armenians in Russia.³ Although the rebellion led by Pugachev forced Catherine to conclude the war with the Turks sooner than anticipated, Russian concern for the Christians in the Ottoman em-

¹See document 289.

²See document 298.

³See document 295.

pire,¹ gave Argutinskii hope for the liberation of Armenia. He soon established contacts with the meliks of Karabagh and with Ivan Lazarev, the head of the Lazarean family in Russia. His work was delayed when, in 1778, he was asked to supervise the relocation of the Armenians from the Crimea to Russia and to establish a new home for them in New Nak-hichevan.²

During the two years that Argutinskii worked to settle the Armenians in Russia he made good friends with Prince Gregory Potemkin, a favorite of Catherine's and with General Suvorov, the hero of the Russo-Turkish war. Meanwhile, the Lazarevs had not been idle. Their correspondence with Armenian leaders in India³ and memoranda to General Suvorov and Prince Potemkin focused on the readiness of the meliks. They claimed that the meliks, aided by a few thousand Russian troops, would not only free the Persian Armenians, but would also extend the borders of Russia considerably.⁴

Potemkin, whose power and titles had increased because of his participation in the Russo-Turkish war, his punitive measures against Pugachev and the Cossacks in the Ukraine, and who had been named governor-general of Novorossiisk, Azov, and Astrakhan in 1776, as well as prince of the Holy Roman Empire by Emperor Joseph II, saw a great opportunity to rise even further. In the beginning of January 1780 he sent Suvorov to Astrakhan to assess the Russian forces in the Caspian region and to estimate the strength of the meliks in case of a war with Persia.⁵ Karīm Khan had died a few months earlier and Persia was once again divided among rival khans. With the Ottomans humiliated, there was no obstacle to Russian expansion into Transcaucasia and northern Persia as in Peter the Great's time. After that the conquest of western Armenia and western Georgia would be simple.

Suvorov contacted the leaders of the meliks in Karabagh, Melik Adam of Jraberd and Melik Hovsēp' of Gulistan (also known as Talish).

¹See document 297. Russian efforts were on the behalf of the Orthodox subjects of the Ottomans. The Armenians of the Ottoman empire were not discussed. Article XXIII of the treaty of Küçük Kaynarca, however, asked the Turks to threat the Orthodox Christians in apart of Georgia and Mingrelia well.

²See documents 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, and 313.

³See document 300.

⁴See document 306. Ivan Lazarev informed Suvorov that Armenians could muster 60,000 men, *ibid.*

⁵See document 307.

They arrived in Astrakhan and conferred with Suvorov.¹ Suvorov's report to Potemkin was not very enthusiastic. He wrote that Melik Shahnazar of Varanda and his son Jamshid were good friends of Ebrāhīm Khan and could not be relied upon. Melik Esayi of Dizak was old and his district was under the control of his nephew who was also in league with the khan. The melik of Khachen, Mirza Khan, was trying to remain neutral and bring peace between Ebrāhīm and Meliks Adam and Hovsēp'. Thus the meliks were not united and only two could be relied upon. He added that Erekle had his own problems. He had to reassert his position over the khan of Erevan, while the prince of Imeret'i, who had been a hostage at Karīm Khan's court had returned and was plotting against Erekle.² The situation was not so promising after all.

Catherine was a prudent monarch who did not rush into war without having all the facts. One scholar has accurately described Catherine's policy toward the Armenians and Georgians:

*For all Catherine's concern over Christians living under Muslim rule, her actions in the Caucasus showed that she never allowed that issue to force her along a course that was not chosen first and foremost in the basis of Russia's best interests.*³

She immediately put a stop to Potemkin's plans and ordered a thorough examination of the possibility of a future campaign into Transcaucasia.

Meanwhile rumors of an imminent Russian invasion reached Ebrāhīm and the other Muslim khans in the region.⁴ Ebrāhīm Khan immediately took over Dizak, killing Melik Esayi and his son. Meliks Adam and Hovsēp', fearing for their lives sought refuge with Erekle.⁵ Erekle interceded on their behalf and they were permitted to return. Taking a considerable risk the meliks sent letters to Potemkin Suvorov and Catherine relating their dangerous situation and requesting the promised Russian arrival. They added that they were ready to feed the Russian army and help it in any way they could.⁶ Both meliks, who were old, continued their activities in secret, fell sick and died a few years later.⁷

¹See document 308.

²*Ibid.*

³M. Atkin, *Russia and Iran, 1780-1828* (Minneapolis, 1980), p. 24.

⁴See document 315.

⁵See document 317.

⁶See documents 319, 320, and 322.

⁷See document 345.

Catherine refused to be moved. Instead, in the fall of 1782 she sent Dr. Jacob Reineggs, an ambitious geologist and adventurer, to assess the military strength and the value of the minerals of the region.¹To ensure reports that echoed his sentiments, Prince Potemkin arranged the appointment of his nephew, General Paul Potemkin, as the new commander-in-chief of the Russian forces in the Caucasus.²General Potemkin also sent agents to gather information. The agent reported that Karabagh had enough provisions to feed a 50,000-man army.³General Potemkin, realizing the need for more Russian troops, wrote to the meliks asking them to be patient. He also wrote an interesting letter to Argutinskii asking him to supply exact details on the conditions of local roads, navigability of rivers, location of population centers, forests and the number of forts troops in the region. He also asked about Erekle's army and his relations with the meliks.⁴An ecstatic Argutinskii, believing that the Russian invasion was imminent responded immediately with a long letter with precise information on every issue, and added that the meliks and their followers would join the Russian army upon its arrival.⁵

Meanwhile, secretly encouraged by the meliks, Kat'oghikos Hovhannēs Hasan-Jalalean of Karabagh wrote to Catherine begging her to follow the steps of Peter the Great and invade Persia. He assured her that an armed Armenian population would welcome the Russians and would submit to her protection.⁶Reineggs' reports to Prince Potemkin, forwarded to Catherine, also stated that the Armenians and Georgians were anxious for the Russian arrival and that the meliks were prepared to feed and maintain the Russian army. For the Russians, the most important item in his reports however, was the fact that Erekle was prepared to become a loyal vassal of Russia.⁷

General Potemkin continued his efforts and sent Armenian agents to gather even more information.⁸He fed Armenian hope that Catherine was ready to act at any moment.⁹Argutinskii was also convinced and sent

¹See document 324.

²*Ibid.*

³See document 325.

⁴See document 326.

⁵See document 327.

⁶See document 329.

⁷See document 331.

⁸See document 330.

⁹See document 333.

messengers to the meliks to be ready.¹ By spring 1783 the Armenian meliks responded enthusiastically that they were preparing provisions for the Russians and were ready to fight.² They told General Potemkin that he would need an army of 30,000 and that they would be fully responsible for feeding and maintaining the army.³

Realizing Catherine's hesitation to commit troops, Prince Potemkin now approached her with a new idea. Since Erekle was prepared to do so, it would be in Russia's best interest to form an alliance with the Georgian monarch, who in turn would convince Ebrāhīm Khan and the other khans to throw their lot in with Russia.⁴ Potemkin informed Argutinskii that the meliks would rule their five districts, while Ebrāhīm would remain the khan of Karabagh. His order to General Potemkin, however, was to overthrow Ebrāhīm Khan if necessary.⁵ Kat'oghikos Hovhannēs administered a loyalty oath to the meliks and they prepared for war with the Persians. Even the cautious Kat'oghikos Ghukas⁶ began to prepare for the arrival of the Russians. The Armenians were of course unaware that Catherine had given no order for such an undertaking.

By summer of 1783, Catherine bombarded by reports from Reineggs and Gregory Potemkin approved the Russo-Georgian alliance. The treaty of Georgievsk put Georgia under the protection of Russia. Georgian nobility was enrolled in the lists of Russian nobility and 1,800 Russian troops led by Colonel Burnashev arrived in Tiflis. A year later Russia established the fort of Valdikavkaz and completed a road through the Daryal Pass linking Georgia with the Russian troops in the northern Caucasus.

The treaty alarmed the Ottomans and following the Russian annexation of the Crimea they sent envoys to the khans of Transcaucasia with gifts to keep them from falling into the Russian orbit.⁷ Melik Shahnazar was invited by Argutinskii to abandon Ebrāhīm and join the other meliks.⁸ Ebrāhīm Khan panicked. He immediately dispatched a letter to General Potemkin stating his peaceful intentions. Hosein Khan of Erevan

¹See document 336.

²See document 335.

³See document 336.

⁴See document 339.

⁵See document 338.

⁶See documents 340, 343, and 344.

⁷See documents 362, 377

⁸See document 348.

also rushed to present his peaceful intentions.¹The khans hoped that Catherine would agree to mutually beneficial treaties, which would enable them to keep their domains as vassals of Russia rather than of Persia.

Argutinskii was so sure of the liberation of Armenia that he drafted a proposal for a future Armeno-Russian treaty.²This document, one of the most interesting in this study, detailed the relations of the future Armenian kingdom with Russia. Russian troops would be stationed in the new Armenia and would be paid by the Armenians. Armenia would have a port on the Caspian Sea for trade, and would maintain an envoy in St. Petersburg. Argutinskii even described the future Armenian flag, coat of arms and medals.³

While the Turks of Bayazid and Kars and Persian khans of Azerbaijan were fortifying their districts against a possible Russo-Georgian invasion,⁴the Armenians of Erevan write to Argutinskii stating that they were anxiously awaiting the Russian forces.⁵Even Solomon of Imeret'i shifted his allegiance from the Turks to the Russians.⁶

By 1784 Catherine had tempered her objections to a Persian invasion. She also gave 60,000 rubles to Prince Potemkin to cultivate the various khans of the Caucasus to come to her side peacefully.⁷Potemkin informed her that Ebrāhīm Khan, and the Armenian meliks were both ready to receive Russian troops.⁸Although Catherine wished to keep Ebrahim and other Muslim khans in place, General Potemkin was not so sure. In a letter dated January 1784 he asked his uncle what kind of government should be installed in Karabagh after it became independent? Should Ebrāhīm be exiled? Who should rule Erevan, Armenians, who formed the majority of the population, or Erekle, who claimed suzerainty over it?⁹Meanwhile, General Potemkin continued to gather reports from

¹See document 352.

²See document 357.

³*Ibid.*

⁴See document 359

⁵See documents 358, 369.

⁶See document 360.

⁷J. Alexander, *Catherine the Great* (London, 1999), p. 353.

⁸See document 365.

⁹See document 360.

Armenian agents and merchants on the conditions in Persia proper and its potential for retaliation against Russia.¹

Realizing his precarious position, Ebrāhīm sent a secret message to the Sultan of Turkey pledging his allegiance,² while at same time he promised to submit to Russia.³ He also arrested Melik Abov, son of Melik Hovsēp' and the Melik Mejlum, the son of Melik Adam. They were released after agreeing to write complimentary letters about Ebrāhīm to Russia.⁴ The meliks immediately sent an urgent message to General Potemkin to send troops to Ganja in case Ebrāhīm decided to destroy them all.⁵ Erekle also informed General Potemkin that Ebrāhīm had to be deposed for he would eventually destroy the Armenian meliks because of their relations with Russia.⁶ Despite all this Catherine still hesitated. Argutinskii's letters to Ivan Lazarev and Shahamir Shahamirean in India began to sound desperate.⁷

The Turks, fearing another Russian invasion of Transcaucasia, prepared for war. The Russo-Turkish War of 1787-1792 halted all activities with the meliks of Karabagh. Realizing Russia was not going to act, Ebrāhīm put aside his pretenses and imprisoned Abov, the other meliks, and Kat'oghikos Hovhannēs. He tortured them and threatened their lives. However, hearing that a Georgian army had arrived in Ganja, he released them after taking 15,000 rubles in fines. The kat'oghikos did not survive the ordeal and died.⁸ Informed of the Georgians presence in Ganja Abov and Mejlum fled there. The Georgians who had gone to Ganja to expel Lesghian attacks invited them to Tiflis. The two meliks with a handful of family members left for Georgia, Their property and followers were left behind. They wrote to Catherine for help.⁹ Soon thousands of Armenians from Karabagh, including most of the meliks and their families (except for Melik Shahnazar) fled to Tiflis, Shamkhor, Ganja and Erevan, that is regions under Erekle's protection.¹⁰ Ebrāhīm had achieved his dream.

¹See documents 361, 363.

²See document 384.

³See document 377.

⁴See document 366.

⁵See document 371.

⁶See document 384.

⁷See documents 374, 379, 381, and 382.

⁸See documents 386, 388.

⁹See documents 391, 392.

¹⁰See document 396.

The Armenians of Karabagh, now leadership, submitted to him and paid taxes. They were not treated worse than his Muslim subjects. Erekle invited the Armenians to his capital but refused to fight Ebrāhīm. His reward for staying loyal to Russia during the Russo-Turkish war was his being able to put his grandson Solomon II on the throne of Imeret'i in 1789 and to see most of historic Georgia under the rule of his family.

The disappointment of Argutinskii, Lazarev, and Shahamirean had no bounds. Kat'oghikos Ghukas who has preached caution was vindicated. As the war ended Prince Potemkin asked Argutinskii to supervise the resettlement of the Armenians from Bessarabia into Russia. Possibly embarrassed for not being able to carry out his plans for the Armenians, he gave the archbishop full power to built an Armenian town called Grigoriopol'. The Armenians would receive money, land, and full protection during their relocation. Like New Nakhichevan, they would have their own churches, clergy, courts, and local administration.¹

Argutinskii and Lazarev, however, continued to petition Catherine to restore the Armenian kingdom.² Catherine's answer, like that of Peter, was for the Armenians to either move to regions under Erekle's protection, or to immigrate to Russia, where they, like their fellow countrymen, would enjoy the full benefits of the empire. Catherine was so confident of the security of her state that she even pulled the Russian troops out of Tiflis. Argutinskii and Lazarev now concentrated their efforts on Platon Zubov; a new favorite of Catherine's who had replaced the late Prince Potemkin as the governor-general of Novorossiisk.³

Amidst all these activities, no one realized that Āġā Moḥammad Khan Qajar, who had slipped away following the death of Karīm Khan, had managed to gather the Qajars and was in the process of becoming the new master of Persia. After defeating the Afshar and Zand princes and cruelly subduing all other pretenders, he sent letters to Erekle and the khans of Erevan, Nakhichevan, Karabagh, and Ganja to resubmit to Persia.⁴ Erekle's, Queen Darejan's and Tchavtchavadze's frantic pleas to Catherine and Gudovich, the new Russia commander of the Caucasus army of the Caucasus, were not taken seriously. The Russians felt that the Georgian army was capable of taking care of the eunuch usurper.⁵

¹See documents 397, 399, 400, 401, 402, 403, 405, 406, 411, and 413.

²See document 404.

³See documents 407, 414.

⁴See document 416.

⁵See documents 417, 418, and 419.

Āḡā Moḥammad Khan crossed the Arax. All the khans, except Ebrāhīm, submitted. Āḡā Moḥammad continued on to Tiflis where he defeated Erekle's army and sacked the city on 11 September 1795.¹ He took 15,000 Armenian and Georgian prisoners and returned to Persia.²

Catherine angered by such an affront on one of her Christian protectorates, had no choice but to order her a full retaliation. Gudovich was recalled and Valerian Zubov, the younger brother of Platon Zubov, was appointed commander-in-chief. Argutinskii's and Lazarev were overjoyed. They corresponded with Erekle and the Russian generals in charge of the invasion. They informed the Armenian leaders in Transcaucasia that the day of reckoning and liberation was at hand.³ Catherine's instructions to Valerian Zubov indicate that she intended to keep Ebrāhīm Khan in place. He would rule Karabagh, while the meliks of the five districts would be restored to their autonomous status.⁴ The Empress hoped to restore peace without a long war in the interior of Persia or the mountains of the Caucasus. Unlike Europe, the region did not have adequate roads and navigable rivers to transport ammunition and supplies. The climate fostered disease and the mountains and deserts were insurmountable. She therefore arranged for a brother of Āḡā Moḥammad Khan, Moṛṭazā Qolī, who had sought refuge in Russia, to return to Astarabad and rally the Qajars against Āḡā Moḥammad.⁵ Catherine's manifesto to the people of Transcaucasia assured them that every khan and every official would remain in place and that the Muslims should not fear the Christian army.⁶ The Russians had come to rid Persia from the terrible usurper. Her action thus forestalled any Ottoman objections or interference.

The Russian army rushed into Transcaucasia from three directions, Georgia, Shirvan, and Derbent. By fall 1796 the Russians had reached the Kura River. Ebrāhīm and most of the other khans submitted right away. Argutinskii, like Minas before him, joined the Russian troops and sent joyous letters to Armenian leaders that the day of deliverance was near.⁷ Zubov and he wrote to Kat'oghikos Ghukas to prepare the Armeni-

¹The famous Armenian *ashugh* (minstrel), Sayat Nova, refused to convert and was killed by the Persians.

²See document 420.

³See documents 421, 422, 423, 424 425, and 427.

⁴See document 426.

⁵See document 436.

⁶See document 428.

⁷See documents 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, and 436.

ans of the Ararat region.¹ After centuries of Muslim domination, the Armenians could see their freedom on the horizon. Then the unexpected happened. Catherine suddenly died on 6 November 1796. Four days later, her son, Emperor Paul, who disliked his mother, her policies, and her favorites, countermanded the recruiting levy for the Persian campaign.

Epilogue

The news of Catherine's death did not reach all the commanders of the Caucasian and Caspian armies until the end of the year. In November, Salīm Khan wrote to Archbishop Argutinskii that he was prepared to supply the Russian army with provisions.² On 16 December 1796 Zubov, camped by the Kura River, wrote to Argutinskii thanking him for calming the fears of Ĵavād Khan of Ganja at the appearance of Rimskii-Korsakov's army.³

Although the campaign was halted the Russian troops stayed in place until Paul, in the spring of 1797, withdrew them back to the Caucasian Line. Zubov was recalled and replaced by Gudovich. The last Russian troops evacuated Georgia that summer.

On 9 June 1797 Āġā Moḥammad Shah wrote to Erekle that if he did not submit, Georgia would once again suffer the terrors of an invasion.⁴ Receiving no answer, the Persian Shah invaded Erevan and Shushi. Ebrāhīm Khan fled to his relatives in Daghestan and Shushi was taken. Erevan submitted as well and Moḥammad Khan was replaced with 'Alī Qolī Khan. Nakhichevan was taken and its khan, Kalb 'Alī, was blinded. A new invasion of Georgia was planned and the Shah even contemplated the removal of the entire Armenian and Georgian population to the interior of Persia, when he was murdered by his servants on June 17, 1797 in Shushi.

Although the immediate danger to Georgia and Armenia was averted, Erekle and the Armenian leaders realized that the Persians would return. Numerous petitions from Georgians and Armenians, and their friends in Russia, forced Paul to reassess his policy. A year later the Tsar reaf-

¹See documents 434, 437.

²*AVPR*, Russia's Relations with Armenia, group 100/3 (1764-1800), file 462 f. 56.

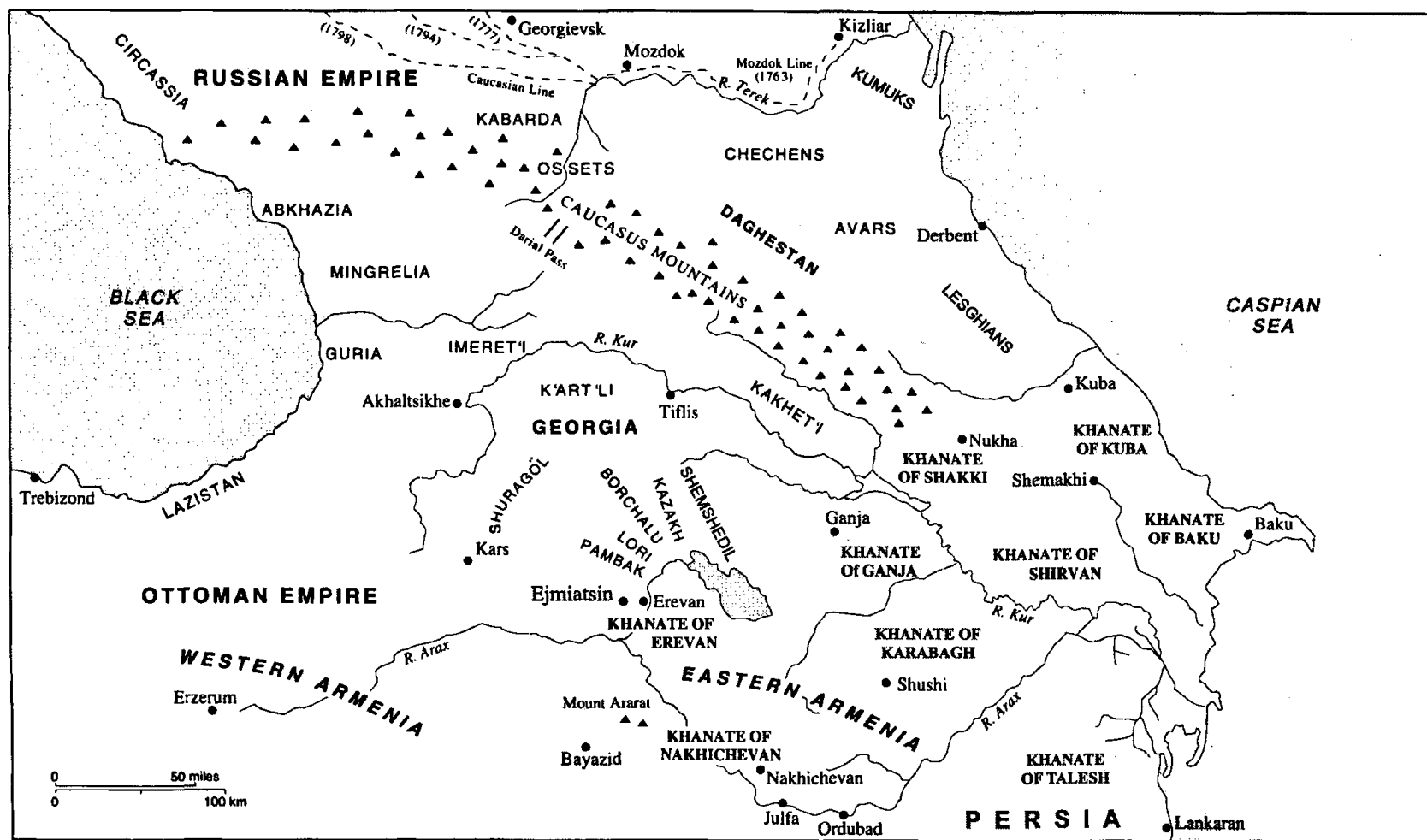
³*SAAN*, III, 341.

⁴*Gramoty*, II (2), 164-165.

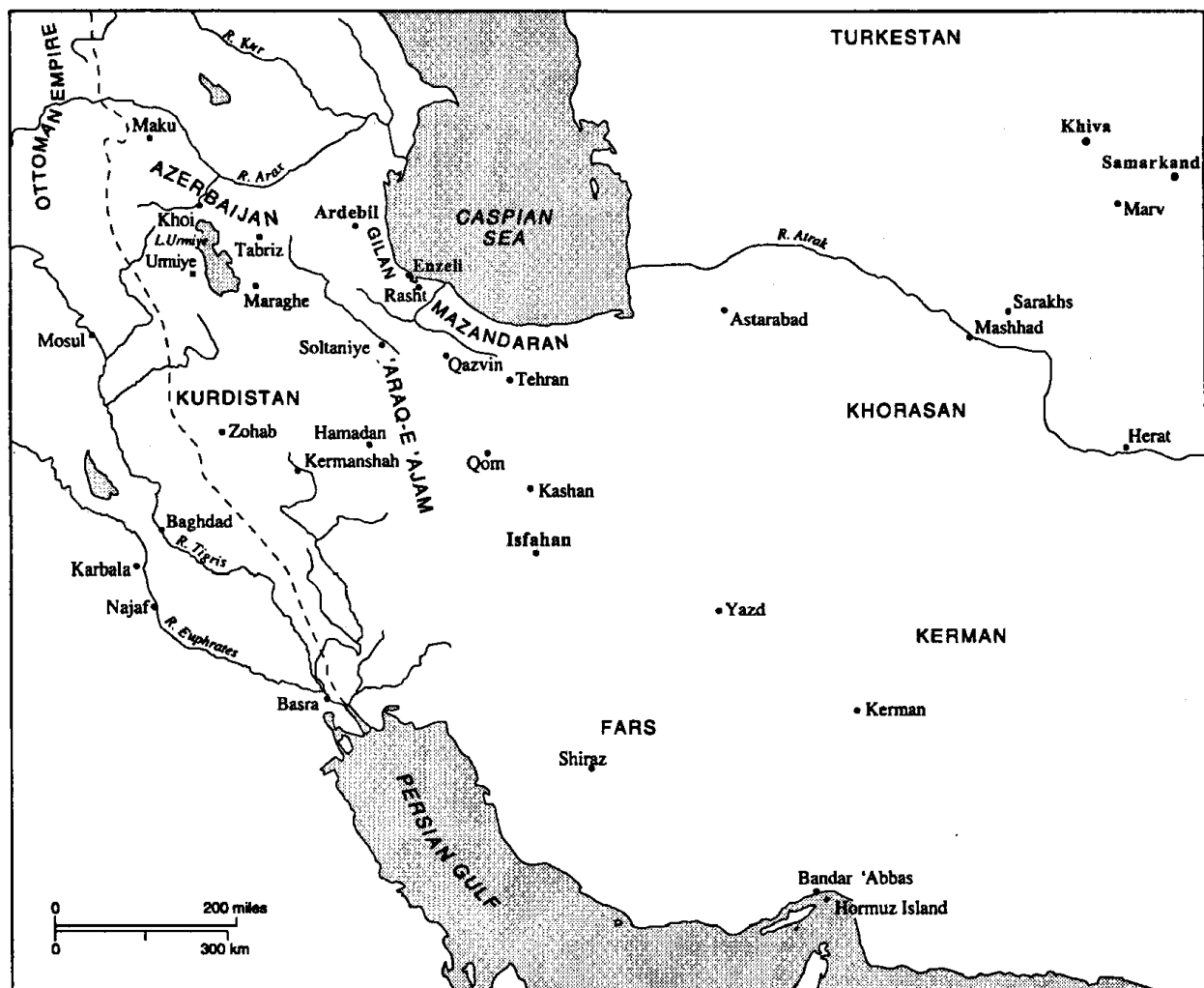
firmed Russia's commitment to Georgia and sent a token force to Tiflis. At the dawn of the 19th century, following the murder of Paul, Tsar Alexander revived his grandmother's policy and began Russia's fourth and final attempt to conquer the Caucasus and Transcaucasia.¹

¹Documents from the archives of Russia, Armenia, Persia, Georgia and the Ottoman Empire relating to the 19th century are in Bournoutian, *Russia and the Armenians in Transcaucasia, 1797-1889*.

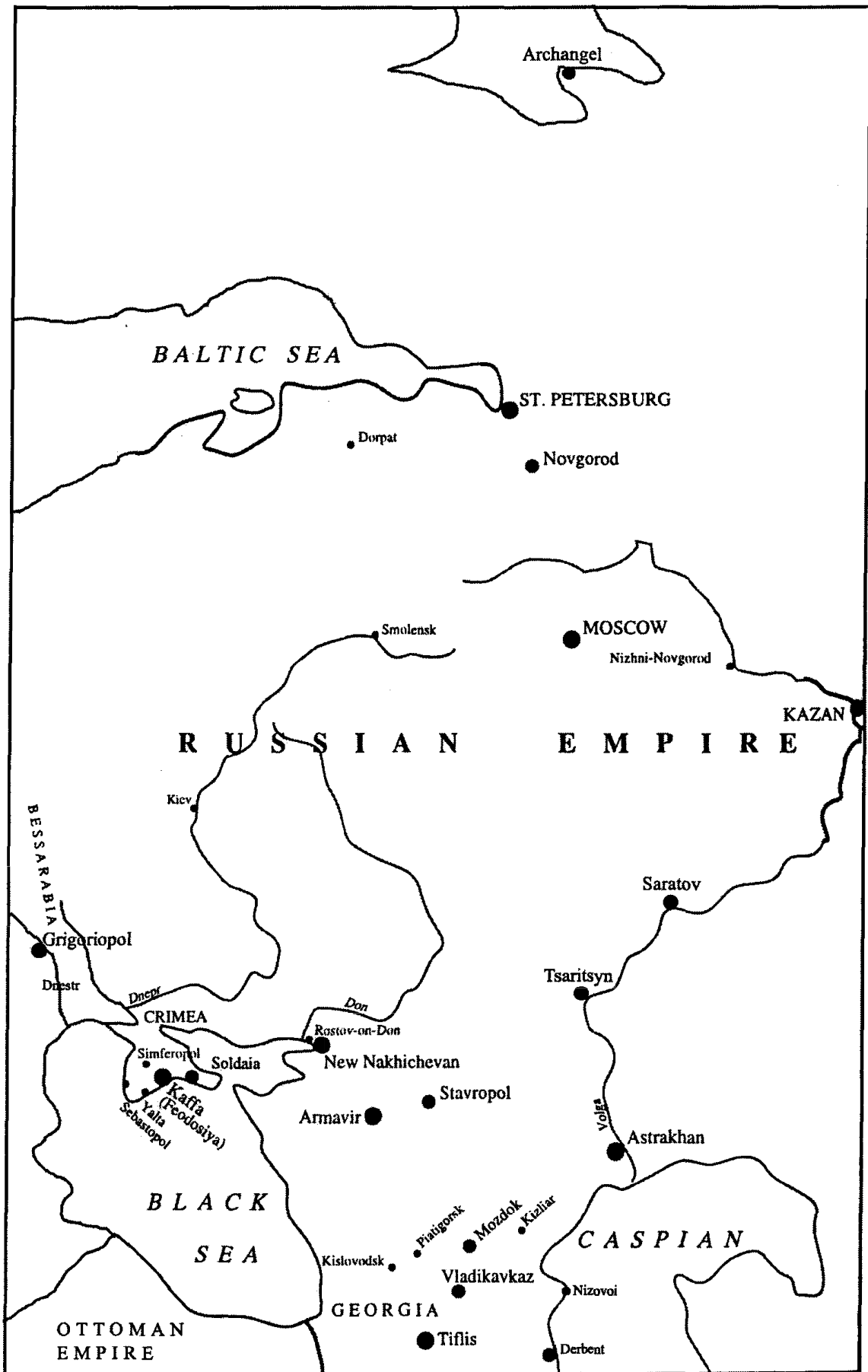
The evidence clearly indicates that the Armenians of Karabagh began their struggle for self-determination long before the last two decades of the 20th century. Their struggle was seen as legitimate by the Russians, who promised to aid them achieve their independence. Despite being abandoned or ignored by Peter the Great, Catherine the Great and Paul, the Armenians of Karabagh fought against tremendous odds and managed to keep their identity. Although the Russian annexation of Karabagh in 1806 provided much-needed security for the Armenians living there, its inclusion in the Caspian or Muslim Provinces of Russia severed it from the rest of eastern Armenia. Georgia and the Muslim Province (the later Azerbaijan Republic) were thus enlarged at the expense of historic Armenia. The efforts of Armenian leaders such as Nersēs of Ashtarak could not convince the Tsars to rearrange the administrative borders in Transcaucasia. After the fall of the Romanovs, the Armenians of Karabagh once again expressed their desire for self-determination. The republics of Armenia and Azerbaijan fought over Karabagh during the 1918-1920 period. After Sovietization, Moscow included Karabagh as part of Azerbaijan and Ghap'an as part of Armenia. As an afterthought, however, it did permit a truncated *khamse* (Nagorno-Karabagh) to have an autonomous status under Azerbaijani rule. Some Armenians emigrated, while others continued to petition Moscow for a change of status. The decline and fall of the Soviet Union began a major revival for self-determination in Nagorno-Karabagh and resulted in a bloody war between the Azeris and the Armenians. After five years of war and thousands of casualties on both sides, the Karabagh Armenians restored their control over Nagorno-Karabagh and declared it independent. Its independence has not been recognized and its fate rests on negotiations between Russia, United States, the European Community, Azerbaijan and Armenia.



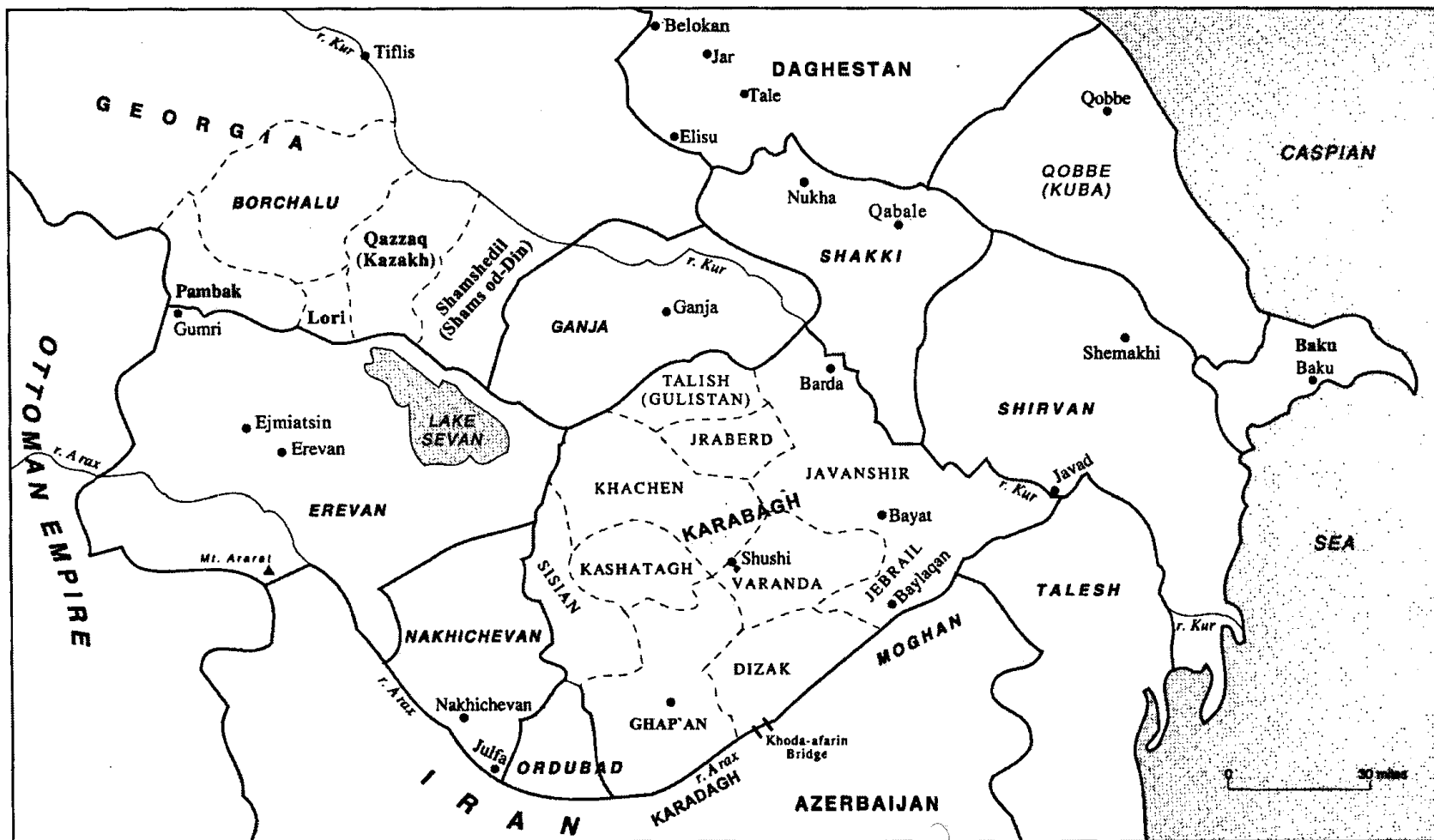
Map 1: The Caucasus in the Eighteenth Century



Map 2: Persia in the Eighteenth Century



Map 3: Armenian Centers in Russia in the Eighteenth Century



Map 4: Karabagh and its Neighbors in the Eighteenth Century

Appendix

Russian Tsars (Romanovs)

Michael (1613-1645)
Alexis (1645-1676)
Fedor II (1676-1682)
Peter and Ivan V co-rulers, with Sophia as regent 1682-1689
Peter I, The Great (1689-1725)
Catherine I (1725-1727)
Peter II (1727-1730)
Anna (1730-1740)
Ivan VI (1740-1741)
Elizabeth (1741-1762)
Peter III (1762)
Catherine II, The Great (1762-1796)

Persian Shahs

Safavids

‘Abbās I, The Great (1587-1629)
Şafī I (1629-1642)
‘Abbās II (1642-1666)
Soleimān I [Şafī II] (1666-1694)
Soltān Hosein (1694-1722)
Ṭahmāsp II (1722-1732)
‘Abbās III (1732-1736)

Afshars

Nāder (1736-1747)
‘Ādel (1747-1748)
Ebrāhīm (1748)

Zands

Karīm Khan (1750-1779)

‘Alī Morād Khan and Naẓar ‘Alī Khan in Shiraz and Isfahan
(1779-1785)

Ĵa‘far (1785-1789)

Lotf ‘Alī (1789-1794) in parts of Persia

Qajars

Faṭḥ ‘Alī Khan (1721-1750), in Mazandaran

Moḥammad Ḥasan Khan (1750-1770), in Mazandaran

Ḥosein Qolī Khan (1770-1779), in Mazandaran

Āḡā Moḥammad (1779-1797)

Ottoman Sultans

Murat IV (1623-1640)

Ibrahim (1640-1648)

Mehmet IV (1648-1687)

Suleiman III (1687-1691)

Ahmet II (1691-1695)

Mustafa II (1695-1703)

Ahmet III (1703-1730)

Mahmut I (1730-1754)

Osman III (1754-1757)

Mustafa III (1757-1774)

Abdülhamit I (1774-1789)

Selim III (1789-1807)

*Georgian Rulers (Bagratids)**K‘art‘li*

Rostom [Kosrow Mirza] (1632-1658)

Wakhtang V [Shahnavāz I] (1658-1676)

Giorgi XI or Shahnavāz II (1676-1688, 1703-1709)

Erekle I [Naẓar ‘Alī Khan] (1688-1703)

K‘aikhosro (1709-1711)

Wakhtang VI [first reign] (1711-1714)
 Iese [as 'Alī Qolī Khan and Mustafa Pasha] (1714-1716, 1724-1727)
 Bak'ar (1717-1719)
 Wakhtang VI (second reign as Hosein Qolī Khan)(1719-1723)
 Puppet rulers under Turkish occupation (1723-1735)
 Puppet rulers under Persian occupation (1735-1744)
 T'eimuraz II of Kakhet'i (1744-1762)

Kakhet'i

T'eimuraz I (1606-1616, 1623-1632-1648)
 Persian governors (1648-1664)
 Archil of K'art'li (1664-1675)
 Persian governors (1675-1703)
 David II [Imam Qoli Khan](1703-1722)
 Constantine II [Moḥammad Qolī Khan](1722-1732)
 T'eimuraz II (1732-1744)
 Erekle II (1744-1762)

Kings of United K'art'li and Kakhet'i

Erekle II (1762-1798)

Imeret'i

Alexander III (1639-1660)
 Bagrat IV (1660, 1664-1678, 1679-1681)
 Wakhtang (1661, 1668)
 Archil of K'art'li (1661-1663, 1678-1679, 1690-1691, 1695-1696, 1698)
 Demetre of Guria (1663-1664)
 Giorgi III of Guria (1681-1683)
 Alexander IV (1683-1690, 1691-1695)
 Giorgi IV (1696-1698)
 Simon (1699-1700)
 Mamia of Guria (1701-1702, 1711, 1713)
 Prince Abashidze (1702-1707)
 Giorgi V (1707-1720)
 Alexander V (1720-1752)
 Solomon I (1752-1765, 1768-1784)
 T'eimuraz (1765-1768)
 David (1784-1789)
 Solomon II [grandson of Erekle II](1789-1810)

Armenian Church Leaders

Kat'oghikoses at the Holy See of Ējmiatsin, Vagharshapat

- Dawit' IV of Vagharshapat (1590-1629)
- Movsēs III of Tat'ew (1629-1632)
- P'ilippos of Aghbak (1633-1655)
- Hakob IV of Julfa (1655-1680)
- Eghiazar of Aynt'ap (1682-1691)
- Nahapet I of Edessa (1691-1705)
- Aghek'sandr I of Julfa (1706-1714)
- Astuatsatur I of Hamadan (1715-1725)
- Karapet II of Ulnia (1726-1729)
- Abraham II of Khoshab (1730-1734)
- Abraham III of Crete (1734-1737)
- Ghazar I of Jahuk (1737-1751)
- Minas I of Akn (1751-1753)
- Aghek'sandr II of Byzantium (1753-1755)
- Hakob V of Shemakhi (1759-1763)
- Simēon of Erevan (1763-1780)
- Ghukas of Garin (1780-1799)
- Hovsēp' Arghut'ean (1800 died in 1801 without being consecrated)

Kat'oghikoses of Aghuank' at Gandzasar and The Three Youths Monastery in Karabagh

- Hovhannēs IX Hasan-Jalalean (1632-1634)
- Grigor III Hasan-Jalalean (1634-1653)
- Petros III (Hasan-Jalalean?) (1653-1675)
- Simēon IV (1675-1701) "anti-kat'oghikos"
- Eremia II (1676-1701)
- Esayi Hasan-Jalalean (1702-1728)
- Nersēs V (1728?-1763) "anti-kat'oghikos"
- Irsayēl (1763-1765) "anti-kat'oghikos"
- Hovhannēs X Hasan-Jalalean (1763-1786)
- Simēon V (1794-1810)

Sargis Hasan-Jalalean (1810-1815, d. 1828)

Claimed throne in 1792 but retired in 1794, fled to Georgia in 1799, returned to Gandzasar in 1806, recognized as kat'oghikos in 1810. The kat'oghikosate of Aghuank' was liquidated in 1815.

Patriarchs of Constantinople

Zak'aria of Van (1626-1631)

Hovhannēs of Constantinople (1631-1636)

Zak'aria (second time, 1636-1639)

Dawit' Arewelts'i (1639-1641)

Kirakos Arewelts'i (1641-1642)

Khach'atur of Sivas (1642-1643)

Dawit' (second time, 1643-1644)

T'ovmas of Peria (1644)

Dawit' (third time, 1644-1649)

Dawit' (fourth time, 1650-1651)

Eghiazar of Aynt'ap (1651-1652)

Hovhannēs (1652-1655)

T'ovmas (second time, 1657-1659)

Martiros of Kafa (1659-1660)

Ghazar of Sivas (1660-1663)

Hovhannēs T'iw't'wnji (1663-1664)

Sargis of T'ēk'irdagh [Rodosto] (1664-1665)

Hovhannēs (second time, 1665-1667)

Sargis (second time, 1667-1670)

Step'anos of Meghri (1670-1674)

Hovhannēs of Amasia (1674-1675)

Andrēas of Constantinople (1675-1676)

Karapet of Kayseri (1676-1679)

Sargis (1679-1680)

Karapet (second time, 1680-1681)

T'oros of Constantinople (1681)

Karapet (third time, 1681-1684)

Ep'rem (1684-1686)

Karapet (fourth time, 1686-1687)

Khach'atur (1688)

Karapet (fifth time, 1688-1689)

- Matt'eos of Kayseri (1692-1694)
 Ep'rem (second time, 1694-1698)
 Melk'isedek (1698-1699)
 Mkhit'ar (1699-1700)
 Melk'isedek (second time, 1700-1701)
 Ep'rem (third time, 1701-1702)
 Awetik' (1702-1703)
 Galust of Amasia (1703-1704)
 Nersēs of Palat' (1704)
 Awetik' (second time, 1704-1706)
 Martiros of Erzinga (1706)
 Mikayēl of Kharpert (1706-1707)
 Sahak (1707)
 Hovhannēs of Smyrna (1707-1708)
 Sahak (second time, 1708-1714)
 Hovhannēs of Gandzak (1714-1715)
 Hovhannēs of Bitlis (1715-1741)
 Hakob Nalean (1741-1749)
 Prokhoron (1749)
 Minas of Akn (1749-1751)
 Gēorg of Ghapan (1751-1752)
 Hakob (second time, 1752-1764)
 Grigor of Constantinople (1764-1773)
 Zak'aria II (1773-1781)
 Hovhannēs of Hamadan or Baghdad (1781-1782)
 Zak'aria (second time, 1782-1799)
 Daniēl of Surmaṛi (1799-1800)

Glossary of Terms¹

Aghuank': Armenian term for Caucasian Albania, which included Karabagh.

altyn: Russian currency worth 3 kopeks or 6 *den'eg*.

anbar: Persian term for warehouse.

ansyr: Measure of weight approx. one and one-third *puds*.

āqā: Persian term for lord, nobleman.

arshin: Measure of length equal to 28 inches or 71 cm.

ataman: Cossack chief or hetman.

at'orakal: Vicar or deputy of the *kat'oghikos*.

baft: Persian term for anything woven.

batman (man): Persian weight equal from 40 to 84 pounds depending on the region.

beglerbegi: Provincial governor

bek (beg): A grandee or a military leader.

boyar: Russian nobleman.

burmet: Glazed corded red cotton.

čapār: Persian term for courier.

čehārbaf (chahar-gaz): A cloth or sash made of very rich silk fabric.

chetverts: Russian dry measure equal to 210 liters, liquid measure equal to 3 liters.

collegium: Russian administrative departments (ministries) in the 18th century.

dara'i: Striped fabric woven from simple silk.

den'gi: Russian currency worth half a kopek.

desiatin: Russian measure equal to 2.7 acres.

diba (dibaf): The richest grade fabric or moiré silk.

Ējmiatsin: The main Holy See of Armenia located in Vagharshapat.

e'temād ol-dowle (i'timad al-dawla): Chief minister of Persia.

eres': Russian term for heretic (in this case non-Orthodox).

falak: Persian term for *bastinado*.

¹I am indebted to Willem Floor for the explanatory notes of various fabrics. The terms appear in the same transliteration as are in his *The Persian Textile Industry in Historical Perspective, 1500-1925* (Paris, 1999).

farmān (firman): Royal edict or decree.

Gandzasar: The Holy See of the Armenian Church in Aghuank'.

gaz: Persian measure of length varying, depending on locality, from 41 to 44 inches.

golbadan: Silk embroidered kerchiefs.

gostinyi dvor: Russian term for arcade or bazaar.

guberniia: Russian province.

hājji: Someone who has been on a pilgrimage to Mecca.

ilči: Perso-Turkish term for envoy.

jazāyirčis: Musketeers using long guns.

kadkodā: Persian term for head of village.

kalāntar: Secular chief or mayor of a town.

kal'at: Robes of honor.

karakul: Astrakhan lambs wool (black or gray) used for hats or coats.

kat'oghikos (catholicos): Supreme Patriarch of the Armenian Church (traditionally residing at Ējmiatsin). During the period covered in this study there were four kat'oghikoses: Ējmiatsin, Gandzasar, Sis, and Aght'amar. The documents here deal only with the first two. Russian documents occasionally use the term patriarch instead of kat'oghikos. The head of the Georgian Church also used the title of *kat'olikos*.

kejin (kej): Common fabric of waste silk.

k'evkha (kevkhū, kevkhī, kekhyā): Armenian term for village elder.

khakh: Another term for *v'iuk'*.

khanate: Persian province ruled by a khan.

khoja (khwāja): Title given to wealthy Armenian merchants in Persia.

kilim: Inexpensive rug.

Kitai-gorod (literally "China Town"): A district of Moscow inhabited by merchants from the East.

kizilbash (T. *kızılbaş*, P. *qezelbāš*): Followers of the Safavids. The term was sometimes used by the Ottomans and Russians to refer to the Persians or Persia.

komash (qomash): Unglazed red cotton cloth.

kork: Wool spun from the underhair (mohair) of the goat.

kurshaki: A silk of half-silk sash or belt, part of the Georgian costume.

mašk: Sheepskin.

maḥal: Persian term for district or county.

Malorossiiā: The Ukraine, also known as Small Russia.

mahdesi: Someone who had been on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem.

marmar: A coarse and poorly-made cotton fabric.

- mdivanbek*: Georgian court councilor.
- melik*: Armenian petty prince or feudal lord.
- meshchanstvo*: Russian term for petty bourgeoisie.
- meshkibaf*: An inferior silken fabric dyed black.
- meshmesh*: A very thin starched cloth.
- methqal (metqal)*: A kind of muslin, or heavy calico.
- metqāl*: A measure of weight equal to 5 grams.
- ministerstvo*: Russian administrative departments (ministries) in the 19th century.
- mīrzā* (before a proper name): Senior administrative official of a province or district.
- mīrzā* (after a proper name): Prince.
- mov*: Fabric usually woven from pure silk, sometimes mixed with cotton.
- nīmtane*: Persian term for vest.
- nāyeb (nā'eb)*: Deputy, district supervisor.
- namnamduzi (namaz or darak)*: Beaded prayer cloths or prayer stone bags, beaded pouches or holders.
- paron*: A title of respect in Armenian.
- patehduzi (selselehduzi)*: Fine silk embroidery over fine wool.
- patriarch*: The Armenian patriarch was in charge of a specific community. There were two patriarchates during the period of this study: Constantinople and Jerusalem.
- poslanik*: Russian term for envoy.
- prikaz*: Russian administrative departments from the 15-17 centuries.
- pud*: Russian measure of weight equal to 16.39 kg. or approx. 36 lbs.
- qabā*: Robe or garment.
- qalamkar*: A cotton fabric with pen-drawn designs (*batik*). Some of the documents use *chit* (Indian cotton fabric with stamped designs) as synonymous with *qalamkar*.
- qanavat*: A silk cloth of close texture.
- qasab*: Silk and cotton floor mats.
- qeytan*: Braid or cord that was embroidered around the hem of clothing.
- qoṣūn*: Persian term for army.
- qotni* (atlas, or striped satin): A mixed silken-cotton fabric.
- rīš-sefid* (literally "white beard"): Persian term for village elder.
- raqam (rakam)*: Royal edict or decree.
- ruble*: Russian currency weighing as much as 200 grams of silver in the

13-14th centuries. The ruble was standardized in the 16th century and weighed 68 grams of silver. It was divided into 100 kopeks, 200 *den'eg*, or 400 *polushek*.

sardār: General of the army.

sazhen: Russian measure of length equal to 2.13 meters.

seft: Persian term for linen.

seghnagh (also *sighnakh*, T. *siğınak*, P. *seqnaq*, R. *signakh*): Armenian term adapted from the Turkish meaning fortification or stronghold. At times it refers to the entire region of Karabagh.

sepahsalār: Commander of the army.

šalvār (*pārče*): Brocaded breeches or pants.

stol'nik: Russian courtier below the rank of *boyar*.

streletsy: Privileged military corps or guards in Moscovite Russia.

Suse (Susa, Shush, Shosh): Another name for Isfahan.

suzani (*golduzi*): Fine embroidered quilts, mats, or tapestries.

Taurida (Tavrida): Another term for the Crimea.

tenent: From the Italian *tenente*, lieutenant in the navy.

Three Youth's Monastery: Residence of the rival or anti-kat'oghikos of Aghuank' during the 17-18th centuries.

tomān: Persian currency equal to between 8 and 12 rubles during the Safavid period. Its value decreased in the eighteenth century.

Tsargrad: Russian term for Constantinople.

tup (*top*): Bolt of cloth.

Üç-Kilisa (literally "Three Churches"): Perso-Turkish term for Ējmiatsin.

ūstābāşı: Head of the artisans or guilds.

vālī: Persian term for regent or viceroy of Georgia.

vardapet: Armenian celibate priest who has completed studies at a seminary; same as archmandrite in the Orthodox Church.

vedro: Russian liquid measure equal to 21 pints or 12 liters.

verst: Russian measure equal to 3,500 feet.

v'iuk' (*iuk*): A bale or load weighing 6 *puds* in Russia and anywhere from 20 to 80 *batmans* in Persia.

voevoda: Military commander of a region or district in Russia.

yüzbaşı: Turkish term for an officer or commander of 100 men.

zarbaft (also *zarbaf*): Gold or silver embroidered brocades.

zolotnik: Russian weight equal to 1/96th of a pound.

Biographical Notes¹

Abashidze, Giorgi. Imeret'ian nobleman who fought Prince Archil. He usurped the throne of Imeret'i from 1702 to 1707.

'Abbās I (the Great), Persian Shah of the Safavid dynasty (1588-1629). Crowned on 1 October 1588, at the age of seventeen, his reign is universally regarded as the most glorious in the annals of modern Persia. Using force and diplomacy 'Abbās succeeded in securing and expanding the frontiers of Persia. He broke the power of the *qezelbāš* (kizilbash) tribes by creating a new standing army composed of recruits from the ranks of the *ğolām-e kāšša-ye šarīfa* (crown servants or slaves). These servants were Georgian, Armenian, and Circassian Christians who had been taken prisoner during the Persian campaigns in the Caucasus. They had voluntarily or forcibly converted to Islam and were loyal only to the person of the Shah. The Shah also used them, together with Persians, to create a new bureaucracy. In 1598, 'Abbās moved his capital from Qazvin to Isfahan. In 1604/1605 he deported over two hundred thousand Armenians from historic Armenia to Persia. Among them were Armenian merchants from Julfa, who with the Shah's assistance, became major players in the Persian silk trade with Europe throughout the seventeenth century. The construction of magnificent structures as well as the prosperity of the new capital, attracted foreign merchants and missionaries, who flocked to the tolerant monarch's court and who have left numerous accounts of the Armenians of Persia.

'Abbās II, Persian Shah of the Safavid dynasty (1642-1666). The most able and vigorous Safavid ruler after 'Abbās I. He brought most of Persia under the direct administration of the crown and kept the frontiers intact. He built new structures and repaired old ones. He was tolerant and permitted Christians, especially Catholic missionaries, considerable freedom.

¹Dates following rulers, kat'oghikoses, or patriarchs signify reign/time in office. I am indebted to Father Krikor Vardapet Maksoudian's superb work, *Chosen of God* (New York, 1995) for the biographical data on the kat'oghikoses at Ējmiatsin.

‘Abbās III, Persian Shah of the Safavid dynasty (1732-1736). ‘Abbās III was eight months old when he was named Shah by Nāder Khan Afshar in 1732. Nāder, who took the title of viceroy or deputy of the state, was the real ruler of Persia. ‘Abbās III was deposed in 1736 when Nāder was crowned as Shah. He was murdered in 1740.

Abov, Melik. A member of the Beglarian clan, hereditary rulers of the Gulistan district in Karabagh. Abov was the son of Melik Hovsēp’ (also known as Usub, Yusup’, or Yusuf) and brother of Melik Beglar. His Russian orientation gained him the enmity of Ebrāhīm Khan of Shushi. He and his family left Karabagh in the 1780s. They stayed for a while in Ganja. In 1790s he and his followers settled in Georgia. The clan returned to Karabagh following the Russo-Persian War of 1804-1813.

Abraham II of Khoshab. Kat’oghikos at Ējmiatsin from 1730 to 1734. Since most of eastern Armenia, including the Holy See of Ējmiatsin, was under Ottoman control, the Armenian leader at Constantinople and Jerusalem were probably instrumental in electing Abraham, the prior of the Monastery of St. Karapet in Mush as Kat’oghikos. Abraham was a pupil of Vardapet Vahan of Baghēsh and the nephew of the patriarch of Jerusalem, Grigor the Chain-Bearer. He died of an epidemic, which took the life of several clergymen at Erevan and Vagharshapat in 1734.

Abraham III of Crete. Kat’oghikos at Ējmiatsin from 1734 to 1737. The sudden death of Abraham II and the approaching armies of Nāder Khan Afshar, so terrified the brotherhood of Ējmiatsin that they immediately elected Abraham of Tekirdag (Rodosto), who was on a pilgrimage to the Holy See, as the new kat’oghikos. Although forced against his will to accept the job, Abraham’s diplomacy gained him the friendship of Nāder. The Holy See was treated benevolently and many Armenian lives were saved. Abraham was invited to Nāder’s coronation in 1736 and has left a vivid account of the ceremony as well as conditions in eastern Armenia during his tenure.

Abraham, Melik. Abraham was the secular chief of the Armenians of Erevan from the 1780s to 1804. A member of the Aghamalean family, Abraham appealed to Catherine the Great to help the Armenians of Erevan. He left Erevan with the Russian army in 1804, became a Russian subject, and was enrolled in the ranks of the Russian nobility. He re-

turned to Erevan following the first Russo-Persian War and died there in the 1820s.

Abraham Yüzbaşı. Abraham was one of the Armenian leaders who fought the Muslims in Karabagh. In 1730 he and his followers joined the Russian forces under the command of General Rumiantsev.

Adam (also known as Atam or Hatam), Melik. Adam was the secular chief of the Armenian district of Jraberd in Karabagh. He was a member of the Haykazean-Israyēlean clan. He was forced by the khan of Karabagh to leave his domain and settle in Ganja. He returned to Karabagh and died in 1783.

‘Ādel, Persian Shah of the Afshar dynasty (1747-1748). His real name was ‘Alī Qolī Khan and he was the nephew and successor of Nāder Shah. His short rule was spent in fighting various rivals, among them Moḥammad Ḥasan Khan Qajar, whose four-year-old son (the future Āḡā Moḥammad Khan/Shah) he captured and castrated. ‘Ādel was defeated and blinded by his brother, Ebrāhīm, in 1748. Nāder’s grandson, Šāhroḡ, killed him in 1749.

Āḡā Moḥammad Khan Qajar (1779-1797). Founder of the Qajar dynasty of Persia. Having subdued all the rival khans in Persia, Āḡā Moḥammad Khan, in 1795, invaded eastern Armenia and eastern Georgia. His sack of Tiflis forced Catherine to send her armies into Transcaucasia. Āḡā Moḥammad Khan made Tehran the new capital of Persia and took the title of Shah in 1796. Castrated in his youth, Āḡā Moḥammad named his nephew Bābā Khan (the later Faṭḥ ‘Alī Shah) as his heir. Responding to Russian advances in Transcaucasia, he invaded and took the fortress of Shushi, where his servants murdered him in 1797.

Aghek’sandr I of Julfa. Kat’oghikos at Ējmiatsin from 1706 to 1714. Aghek’sandr was the prior of the All Savior Monastery in New Julfa and prelate of Persia. Armenian religious and lay leaders of eastern Armenia and Persia continued to have a major role in the election of the supreme patriarch. They elected Aghek’sandr more than a year after the death of his predecessor Nahapet. The delay may have been due to negotiations with the Armenians of Constantinople, whose acceptance was deemed necessary.

Ahmet (Ahmad) III, Ottoman Sultan (1703-1730). Ahmet fought Peter the Great at the instigation of Charles XII of Sweden, who had taken refuge in the Ottoman Empire following the battle of Poltava (1709), and the envoys of Louis XIV. Peter was caught off guard and was forced to sue for peace in Pruth in 1711 (final agreement signed in 1713). In addition to the loss of Azov and the raising of fortifications on the Black Sea, Russia gave up the right to have an ambassador in Constantinople, promised not to interfere either with the Tatars or the affairs of Poland, and to cease intriguing with the sultan's Orthodox subjects. Peter's defeat by the armies of Ahmet had a major effect on his decision to conclude the 1724 treaty with the Turks. Ahmet's success against Russia was not duplicated in Europe, when in 1718 the Ottomans signed the treaty of Passarovitz lost considerable territory to Austria and Venice. Ahmet's reign is also associated with the famed Tulip period (1718-1730), the rise of the Greek Phanariots, and the abandonment of the devshirme.

Aivaz or Aivas, son of Abraham (also known as Avas Avramov). Aivaz was the envoy of Kat'oghikos Esayi to Russia. He converted to Russian Orthodoxy and took the name of Semen Romanov. He was recruited into the Russian army by Apraksin and died in the Russian campaign in Gilan in early 1725.

Alexei Mikhailovich, Russian Tsar (1645-1676). He was a man of high principles, humanity, and ability. His commercial treaties with the Armenians of New Julfa (1667 and 1673) made Russia a new center of trade activities between East and West and helped the development of domestic trade. His reign witnessed the rise of the nobility at the expense of the peasants. He faced a number of uprisings; the most famous of which was led by Stenka Razin.

Ali Pasha. Ottoman governor of Shakki in the 1720s.

Anna Ivanovna, Russian Tsarina (1730-1740). Anna was the daughter of Ivan V and niece of Peter the Great. Having married a Baltic German duke, she lived in Courland after the death of her husband. The Supreme Privy Council on a number of conditions, which would have limited royal autocracy in favor of the feudal aristocracy, offered her the throne.

With the support of the nobility and the officers of the guard, Anna soon refused to abide by the conditions. She abolished the Supreme Privy Council, granted numerous privileges to the nobility, and appointed Baltic Germans, led by her lover Biron (Biren), and others, such as Ostermann and Münnich, to dominant positions in the government. The tyranny of her German appointees and her dislike of everything Russian made her reign unpopular.

Anthony, son of Nazar. An Armenian Catholic and one of the Papal envoys to Persia from 1669 to 1673.

Anton Ieses-dze Batonishvili (also known as Antoni I). Anton was the Georgian chief patriarch (*kat'olikos/catholicos*) from 1744 to 1755 and again from 1764 to 1788. He was accused of being sympathetic to Roman Catholicism and was exiled to Russia in 1755. In 1764 Erekle II, who wished to establish strong ties with Russia, reinstated him. In 1772, Anton, together with Erekle's son, Levan, went to Russia to conclude an alliance. After staying in Russia for two years no formal alliance was concluded. Russia promised, however, that Georgia would be protected in the forthcoming treaty with the Ottomans (1774). Anton was a very enlightened individual. He was fluent in Russian, translated books from Latin into Georgian, and wrote an important work on Georgian grammar.

Apraksin, Fedor Matveevich (1661-1728). In 1682, Apraksin became a retainer of Peter the Great and helped him form his private corps. From 1693 to 1696 he was the *voevoda* (military commander) of Dvina and the governor of Arkhangel'sk. In 1700 he became chief of the admiralty and the governor of Azov. He was named general-admiral (1708) and count (1709). He was in charge of the Commerce Collegium and served as the governor of Kazan. In 1718 he became the head of the Admiralty and was a member of the court that passed judgment on Peter's son, Alexei. He commanded the Caspian Flotilla during the Persian campaign of 1722-1723 and acted as the governor of Astrakhan. He commanded the Baltic Fleet from 1723 to 1726 and was also the president of the Justice Collegium. He was a supporter of Menshikov and became a member of the Supreme Privy Council in 1726.

Arapov, Semen. Arapov was the Russian consul in Rasht during the 1730s.

Archil (also known as Shah Nazar Khan and Archil II). Archil (born in 1647) was the son of Wakhtang V (also known as Shahnavaz I) of K'art'li. Together with his father, he tried to unify all of Georgia. Although they gained approval from the Safavid court (by nominally converting to Islam), they met resistance from Turkey, as well local Georgian nobles. Archil periodically ruled Imeret'i (1661-1663, 1678-1679, 1690-1691, 1695-1696, 1698) and was the king of Kakhet'i from 1664 to 1675. He lived in Moscow from 1699, where he established the first Georgian press. He died there in 1713.

Ardin-Noshchokin, Afonasi Lavrent'evich. Grand boyar in charge of foreign affairs; he was one of the signatories of the 1667 trade agreement between Russia and Persia. He served as the Russian envoy to Persia in 1672.

Argutinskii Iosif (Arghutean Hovsēp'). Hovsēp' was born in 1743 and was named prelate of the Armenians in Russia in 1773. He was responsible for the founding of the Armenian city of Grigoriopol' in the Kherson Province (presently in the Republic of Moldova). He was an ardent supporter of Russian expansion into Transcaucasia and an exponent of a Russian orientation among his people. He was elected kat'oghikos in 1800 but died in 1801 in Tiflis on his way to Ējmiatsin.

Ašraf. Afghan ruler of Persia from 1725 to 1729. He was defeated by Nāder, who restored the Safavids.

Astuatsatur I of Hamadan. Kat'oghikos at Ējmiatsin from 1715 to 1725. A former member of the Monastery of the All Savior in New Julfa, Astuatsatur was elected kat'oghikos by the powerful Persian Armenian religious and lay leaders. The Afghan invasion of Persia and the Ottoman occupation of Erevan (1722-1724) significantly reduced the power of the Persian Armenians at Ējmiatsin. His death began the so-called Constantinople or Ottoman period at the Holy See. Karapet II (1726-1729), the prelate of Galatia or Ancyra (modern Ankara) was elected as the new supreme patriarch. After that, the Turks were to play a major role in the election of the kat'oghikos throughout the eighteenth century.

Augustus II. Elector of Saxony, elected King of Poland (1697-1733) after the death of Jan Sobieski. His death began the War of the Polish Succession (1733-1735).

Avan Yüzbaşı (Ivan or Ovanes Babanov) [ca. 1670-1735]. The leader of the Armenian liberation movement in Karabagh during the 1720s, Avan and his family moved from Lori and settled near present-day Shushi in Varanda in 1717. He organized an armed group and became the commander of that unit. His fortification became known as the *little seghnagh*. In 1722 he traveled to Ganja to welcome Peter's army and was instrumental in the formation of a later *seghnagh* in that region. Between 1724 and 1728 he led the organized resistance in the five melikdoms of Karabagh and commanded his troops from the so-called *great seghnagh* in the Mrav Mountains near the Terter River. In the spring of 1724 he went to Ghap'an to help Davit' Bek fight the Muslims. Avan's actions against the Turks and Kurds during 1725-1727 were acknowledged by Shah Tahmāsp II, who bestowed on him the title of khan and chief commander. In 1729, he and his brother, T'arkhan traveled to Baku to seek aid from the Russian army. In 1729 he settled in the Caspian region and joined the Armenian Squadron, where he commanded some 250 men. In 1734 the Russian government gave him the title of senior khan and a village populated by Armenians from Karabagh. Avan played an active role in rescuing Armenian and Georgian prisoners of war and died in Astrakhan in 1735. Some sources (e.g., Raffi and Leo) confuse him with Egan Yüzbaşı, who met Nāder Shah in 1733.

Avramov, Semen. He was the first Russian consul in Persia (in Isfahan) in 1720.

Āzād Khan. Following the death of Nāder, Āzād Khan tried to establish his rule over Azerbaijan. He fought against Karīm Khan, was defeated, and sought refuge in Tiflis in 1757. In 1759, King Erekle II, in order to ingratiate himself before the new ruler of Persia and receiving assurances that Āzād Khan's life would be spared, sent him to Karīm Khan's court in Shiraz. Āzād Khan lived there comfortably until his death in 1781.

Azaria, son of Hovhannēs. An Armenian Catholic and one of the Papal envoys to Persia from 1669 to 1673.

Bagi Yüzbaşı. Bagi was an Armenian leader from Karabagh who had his own group of fighters. In 1727 he and his troops went to Rasht and joined the Russian army. That same year he went to St. Petersburg, where he was awarded a medal by the Russian government and received an annual salary. He joined the Armenian Squadron and served with a rank of major until it was abolished. The rest of his life was spent in Astrakhan, where in the late 1760s he served the interests of the Holy See of Eġmiatsin. He died sometime prior to 1776.

Bak'ar, King of K'art'li (1717-1719). Born in 1699, he was the son of Wakhtang VI who, together with his father, sought refuge in Russia in 1724. He entered the service of Russia and rose to the rank of lieutenant general. He died in 1750.

Bakunin, Ivan. Bakunin was the Russian consul in Rasht in the 1740s.

Bakunin, Peter. Member of the Collegium of Foreign Affairs during the reign of Catherine the Great.

Basaurov, Filibek Shergilovich. Basaurov was a Georgian Armenian, who joined the army of Wakhtang VI. In 1722 he went sent from Tiflis to the Armenian strongholds in Karabagh to help them fight the Muslims. He fought the Turks during the siege of Erevan. From 1725 onward, he, and his troop of 150 men, served in the Russian army. He was frequently used as an envoy and a spy. He died in Kizliar in 1756.

Beketov, Nikita Afonas'evich. He was the governor of Astrakhan from the mid- 1760s to the early 1770s.

Bestuzhev-Riumin, Alexei Petrovich (1693-1766). Russian statesman and diplomat, he began his career during the reign of Peter the Great. In 1740 he was appointed cabinet minister and during the reign of Empress Elizabeth he rose to the rank of vice-chancellor (1741) and chancellor of Russia (1744). His primary policy was to maintain an alliance with Austria and England against France, Prussia, and Turkey. He was accused of treason in 1758 and sentenced to death. The sentence was commuted to life imprisonment. He was freed in 1762 and died in 1766.

Bezborodko, Alexander Andreevich (1747-1799). Bezborodko began his service under Rumiantsev. In 1775 he became secretary to Catherine the Great. He became a member of the Collegium of Foreign Affairs in 1780. In 1784 he became the *de facto* head of that department. He remained a close advisor of Catherine's until 1792. As a diplomat he obtained Turkey's recognition of the annexation of the Crimea (1783), signed the treaty of Jassy, and the convention on the third partition of Poland (1795). He maintained his position after the death of Catherine and in 1797 became the chancellor of Russia.

Bogdan Gurdei. A Georgian who became the Polish envoy to Russia and Persia in the 1670-1671.

Bogdan Saltanov, also known as Ivan Ivliuev (Astuatsatur Sultanean). A Persian-Armenian painter, he was invited to decorate the Armory Chamber in the Kremlin. He arrived in Russia with forty merchants and artisans in 1666. He worked in the Armory from 1667 to 1702. He had numerous students, some of whom became masters in their own right. He died in Moscow in 1705.

Bogoliubov, G. S. Russian consul in Enzeli in 1768.

Brylkin, Ivan Anufrovich. He was the governor of Astrakhan from 1745 to 1756.

Bulgakov, Iakov Ivanovich. He was the Russian ambassador at Constantinople in 1780s.

Burnashev, Stepan D. Colonel Burnashev was in charge of the Russian troops in Tiflis following the Treaty of Georgievsk in 1783.

Buturlin, Alexander Borisovich (1694-1767). General and field marshal Buturlin was a confidant of Peter the Great. He participated in the Persian campaign. From 1731 to 1733 he served with the Russian forces in the Caucasus. In 1738 he took part in the war against the Turks. He was named commander-in-chief of the Russian forces in the Seven Years' War (1756-1763).

Catherine I, Russian Tsarina (1725-1727). Daughter of a Lithuanian peasant, Catherine (originally called Maria) was taken prisoner in 1702 and for all intents and purposes became the wife of Peter the Great. She converted to Russian Orthodoxy and took the name of Catherine. She officially married Peter in 1712 and was crowned empress in 1724. When Peter died without naming an heir, Catherine, with Menshikov's help ascended the throne. She did not participate in the affairs of state and turned its administration to the Supreme Privy Council. She named Peter's grandson, Peter II as her heir.

Catherine II (the Great), Russian Tsarina (1762-1796). Born Sophia Frederika Augusta, Catherine came from a small German princely family. In 1745 she converted to Russian Orthodoxy, took the name of Catherine, and married Peter III, the heir to the Russian throne. She was an extremely able woman, who mastered Russian, read a great deal, and surrounded herself with able men, such as Vorontsov, Rumiantsev, Orlov, Potemkin, Bezborodko, Suvorov, Ushakov, and Zubov. Soon after the accession of Peter III (1762), who was unpopular, Catherine with the help of the nobles and the guards regiment removed him and ascended the throne as Catherine II. Catherine took an active part in the government. Her tolerance attracted foreigners to Russia and her reign introduced many Western ideas to Russia. Her military campaigns against Turkey and her intervention in Poland made Russia a major European power, as well as an active player in the Black Sea region and the Caucasus.

Ch'ēlēbi, K'evkha (or K'ēwkha). One of the elders of Karabagh who corresponded with Russian officials. In 1724, he, together with Yüzbaşı Bagi, went to St. Petersburg to seek Russian aid for Karabagh.

Chekalevskii. Russian consul in Persia in the late 1750s.

Cherkasov (also known as Cherkasski), Alexander Bekovich. Peter the Great sent Cherkasov to Khiva in 1717 to discuss Russian suzerainty over the khanate. He and his troops were all murdered while guests of the khan of Khiva.

Chertkov, Vasilii Alekseevich. He was the governor of Azov in the 1780s.

Chirikov, Michael. Chirikov was the commandant of Astrakhan in 1711.

Constantine II. Ruler of Kakhet'i who was installed by the Ottomans and ruled as Moḥammad Qolī Khan from 1722 to 1732.

Darejan (Daria) of Mingrelia. Queen of Georgia, wife of Erekle II. A strong woman, she petitioned Catherine the Great to save her kingdom from Persian attacks. After the death of her husband, she tried to place her eldest son Yulon on the throne. She was against the Russian annexation of Georgia in 1801 and was put under surveillance in Tiflis. Tsitsianov exiled her to Russia in 1803.

Daudov, Vasilii (Basil Davit'ean). An Armenian from Isfahan who came to Moscow in 1653 and stayed in Russia for fifty years. He became an interpreter was later named *stol'nik*, nobleman, and a *voevoda*. He was also sent as an envoy to Isfahan. He and his son, Babaev, were active in promoting Armeno-Russian and Russo-Persian contacts.

David, Prince of Georgia. David Batonishvili was the eldest son of Giorgi XII (also known as Giorgi XIII). He claimed the title of Prince Regent of Georgia after the death of his father. He maintained his uncertain position until 12 September 1801, when Tsar Alexander confirmed the final annexation of eastern Georgia.

David, Prince of Georgia. Son of Wakhtang V, he sought refuge in Russia.

Davidashvili, Kokhen and Elizbar Romanovich. Georgian brothers who lived in Moscow and who were in the service of Russia. Their other brother had nominally converted to Islam and was the khan of Shemakhi at the start of the 18th century.

Davit' Bek. Davit's birth date is unknown. He was an Armenian soldier in Georgia. In 1722 the Armenians of Ghap'an asked the Georgian king, Wakhtang VI, to send them aid for their armed resistance against Persian and Kurdish khans. The king chose Davit', one of his most able officers. Together with a group of Armenians soldiers, Davit' arrived in Ghap'an, and led the defense of the Siwnik' region until his death. He fought

Turkish and Kurdish tribes, as well as Melik Bagher, an Armenian apostate in Tat'ew. In 1724 Avan Yüzbaşı came from Shushi with 200 of his men and helped Davit' defeat the khans of Ordubad, Nakhichevan, and Bargushat. Davit's fortress at Halidzor became the center of Armenian rule in Siwnik'. In 1725 the Ottomans invaded the region and Davit' Bek fought off their attacks from Halidzor, which was besieged by the Turks. With his small force, Davit' Bek managed to keep the Turks at bay and soon after he drove the Turks from Meghri and Bargushat. In 1727 he contacted Shah Ṭahmāsp II, who recognized him as the ruler of Siwnik'. In 1728 the Ottomans took over much of Karabagh and Siwnik' and forced the Armenian meliks, who had lost hope in Russia, to acknowledge their rule. According to some historians Davit' fought them with his small force and perished in 1728. Other historians believe that he died in late 1725 or early 1726.

Davud Bek. He was the Ottoman governor in Shirvan in the 1720s.

Davydov, Stepan. Armenian from Erevan who was secretly dispatched to Russia by the meliks of Erevan and the kat'oghikos. He entered the service of Russia in 1784 and rose to the rank of major.

Devits, Andrei. Lieutenant General and Commandant of the Kizliar Fort in the late 1740s.

Dolgorukii, Yakov Nikitich. He was the governor of Astrakhan in 1763.

Dolgorukov (Dolgorukii), Vasili Vladimirovich (1667-1746). Prince and General Field-Marshal, Dolgorukov was an active participant of Peter's Persian campaign. In 1726 he was appointed as the commander-in-chief of the Russian forces in the Caucasus. He also served as the president of the War Collegium.

Ebrāhīm, Persian Shah (1747-1748). Nāder Shah's nephew who briefly ruled parts of Persia.

Ebrāhīm Khan (also known as Ebrāhīm Kālīl) of Karabagh (ca. Early 1720s-1806). Son of Panāh Khan of the Ĵavānšīr clan and ruler of most of Karabagh from ca. 1762 to 1806. He managed to kill, exile or subdue most of the meliks of Karabagh and placed his own candidate as the

kat'oghikos of Aghuank'. On 15 May 1805 he signed a treaty which placed his domain under Russian suzerainty. Suspected of betrayal, he was killed by the Russians in 1806.

Eghia Mushegh, son of Astuatsatur. Born in 1689 near Erzerum, Eghia was the son of an important merchant. He became a Catholic and traveled to Persia. In 1724 he and the Capuchin Father Jean Baptist were sent by Shah Tahmāsp II to Europe to seek aid against the Afghans. He wrote a number of books and died in 1750 or 1751.

Elizabeth Petrovna, Russian Tsarina (1741-1762). Daughter of Peter the Great and Catherine I, she came to the throne as a result of a palace coup against the infant Ivan VI. Together with the guards, she removed the Germans and replaced them with Russians, led by her lover, Alexei Razumovsky and his brother Cyril. Ivan and Peter Shuvalov conducted Russia's internal policy, while Alexander Shuvalov became the chief of police. Generals Saltykov and Rumiantsev gave her victories in the Seven Years' War (1756-1763). With the help of nobles such as Michael Vorontsov and Alexander Bestuzhev-Riumin, Elizabeth united European trends with Russian ways. Ivan Shuvalov and Lomonosov founded the University of Moscow during her reign (1755).

Emin, Joseph. Born in Persia in 1726, Joseph and his family moved to India in 1744. He left for London in 1751 against his father's wishes. In 1755 he befriended Edmund Burke and gained access to British noble circles. In 1756 on the recommendation of Lord Northumberland and Duke of Cumberland, he was admitted to the Woolwich Military Academy. In 1757 he joined the British and Prussian armies and fought against the French. In 1759 he traveled to western and eastern Armenia. He tried to convince Kat'oghikos Hakob IV to overthrow the Persian rule with the help of King Erekle II. Disappointed he returned to London and in 1761 he obtained a passport from Prince Golitsyn, the Russian ambassador and traveled to St. Petersburg. Having made a number of friends, including Count Vorontsov, Emin, accompanied by Armenian volunteers, arrived in Tiflis in 1763. Erekle at first agreed to create an Armeno-Georgian force but soon after changed his mind and ordered Emin to leave Georgia. Emin spent the next five years in the northern Caucasus and in 1766 he managed to travel to Karabagh. He presented his plan to the meliks and the kat'oghikos at Gandzasar. Receiving no positive re-

sponse, Emin left the region and returned to India via Persia in 1770. For the next three decades Emin tried to gain financial support for the liberation of Armenia. He died in 1809.

Erekle I of K'art'li (1688-1703). Although Erekle claimed the throne of K'art'li, he refused to become a Muslim and stayed in Isfahan until 1688. When Giorgi XI tried a coup against Persia, the Shah asked Erekle to reconsider and take over the throne of K'art'li. Erekle nominally converted to Islam (took the name of Nāzar 'Alī Khan) and with a Persian army arrived in Tiflis. Giorgi fled to Imeret'i, where his brother, Archil, had usurped the throne. Erekle, who was raised in Russia (from 1653 to 1674) and Persia, lacked knowledge of Georgian customs and soon became unpopular with his subjects. He was dethroned in 1703.

Erekle II, Georgian King (1744-1798). King of Kakhet'i (1744-1762); King of the united eastern Georgia (K'art'li and Kakhet'i) from 1762 to 1798, Erekle maintained good relations with the Afshar and Zand rulers. He led a Georgian contingent in Nāder Shah's campaign in India and surrendered Karīm Khan's enemy, Āzād Khan, to the Zand ruler. By making a pact with Ebrāhīm Khan of Karabagh, Erekle forced the khans of Erevan and Ganja to submit to him. Raids by Lesghians, his fear of the Ottomans, as well as the conclusion of the dynastic struggles in Persia, convinced Erekle to sign the Treaty of Georgievsk (1783), which placed his kingdom under Russian protection. The treaty angered the Muslims and resulted in threats from Persia. Erekle's pleas to Russia were ignored and he was forced to leave his capital, Tiflis, following the attack by Āḡā Moḥammad Khan Qajar in 1795. The last years of his life were spent in requests to Russia to fulfill its obligations to protect Georgia.

Eropkin, Dmitrii. Major-General Eropkin was the commandant of the Holy Cross Fort from the 1720s to the early 1730s.

Esayi Hasan-Jalalean (1702-1728). Kat'oghikos of Aghuank' in Gandzasar. Esayi was a member of the Hasan-Jalalean (as known as Hasan Jalaleants') family. They served as patriarchs of Karabagh during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Esayi was one of the leaders of the Armenian resistance movement in Karabagh during the 1720s. Together with a number of meliks of Karabagh, he asked for Russian help in liberating the region from Muslim rule. In 1722 he went to Tiflis to

meet King Wakhtang VI and to form a joint Armeno-Georgian force to aid the Russian invasion of Transcaucasia. By 1726, however, he gave up on Russia and capitulated to the Turks by encouraging the end of Armenian resistance in the *seghnaghs*. He wrote a short history of Karabagh entitled *Patmut' iwn hamarod Aghuanits' erkri*.

Fath' Alī Khan. Originally khan of Kuba, he managed to conquer Shakki and Baku, Derbent and Saliyan. He was the rival of Ebrāhīm Khan. He was courted both by the Russian and the Turks. He died in 1789.

Fath' Alī Khan Afshar. One of the contenders to throne following the death of Nāder. He was caught by Karīm Khan and beheaded.

Fedor II. Russian Tsar (1676-1682). Fedor was the son of Alexei by his first wife. He became Tsar at age of fourteen and died when he was twenty. He was a sickly individual who knew Polish, Latin, in addition to Russian and Church Slavonic. He is mainly remembered for his abolition of *mestnichestvo* (a system of state appointments based on the hierarchical ranking of boyar families) and burning its records.

Filaret (Philaret)[1613-1633]. Father of Michael Romanov and Patriarch of Russia. He took the title of *Veliki Gosudar* and exercised equal power with his son until his death in 1633.

Frauendorf, Ivan, L'vovich von. Major General von Frauendorf was the commandant of the Kizliar Fort in the 1750s.

Frederick II (the Great) of Prussia (1740-1786). Frederick makes Prussia a major player in Central European politics. Russia and Austria form an alliance against him, which by 1756 results in the Seven Years' War.

Gabriyēl Yüzbaşı. He was the secular chief of the Armenians of the Kırk-Bulagh *maḥal* in the khanate of Erevan from 1780s to 1804. A member of the Geghamean family, he appealed to Catherine the Great to aid the Armenians of Erevan. He left the region with the army of Tsitsianov, became a Russian subject and was enrolled in the ranks of the Russian nobility.

Gagarin, Peter Matv'eevich. Chancellor of Russia in 1711.

Ghazar I of Jahuk. Kat'oghikos at Ējmiatsin from 1737 to 1751. Ghazar was elected at the instigation of some members of the brotherhood at Ējmiatsin and their supporters in Constantinople, who either wanted an eastern Armenian candidate, or did not wish to see Grigor, the patriarch of Jerusalem, as the new kat'oghikos. A decade later, however, the tyrannical behavior of Ghazar forced the brotherhood to ask the leadership in Constantinople to either change the situation or depose Ghazar. When the representatives from Constantinople arrived, Ghazar, taking advantage of Nāder Shah's death wrote to 'Ādel Shah that they were spies. His plan did not succeed and he was deposed in 1748. Vardapet Petros was elected as the new supreme patriarch, but his reign lasted a short time. 'Ādel lost his throne to Ebrāhīm, who reinstated Ghazar as the kat'oghikos at Ējmiatsin.

Ghukas of Karin. Kat'oghikos at Ējmiatsin from 1780 to 1799. Ghukas was a pupil of Kat'oghikos Simēon of Erevan, who designated him as his successor. Wartime conditions precluded the customary consultation with the Armenians of Constantinople. Although they at first refused to accept him, a year later, the new Armenian patriarch of Constantinople accepted Ghukas as the supreme patriarch. Ghukas petitioned Catherine the Great and Paul for Russian protection, but managed to maintain good relations with the Persians and Turks.

Gilanents'(Gilanentz), Petros di Sarkis (Peter Sergeev). Petros was sent to Persia by Minas Vardapet (sometime after 1716) to gather and to transmit reliable information. Petros formed a small Armenian volunteer unit in Rasht and continued to send valuable information from various sources (including Hovsēp' Apisalaimean) to Russia. Following the Russian invasion of Persia in 1722, Petros formed an Armenian fighting squadron, composed of 50 or 100 horsemen (depending on the source), who joined the Russian army. He paid the expenses of the said squadron out of his own pocket. He was killed in action in 1724. His now famous *Chronicle* (see bibliography), which contains his reports, is a valuable primary source on the Afghan invasion of Persia.

Giorgi XI, King of K'art'li (1676-1688 and 1703-1709). Giorgi rebelled against Persia and was replaced by Erekle I of Kakhet'i (who had nominally converted to Islam and had taken the name Nazar 'Alī Khan). In

1703 Giorgi converted to Islam in Isfahan (as Shahnavaz II). He was reinstated as viceroy (vālī) of K'art'li, but did not return to Georgia. He was commissioned to conquer Qandahar. His nephew Wakhtang (later Wakhtang VI) was ordered to act as regent. Mīr Vais, the Afghan, killed him in 1709.

Golitsyn, Alexander. Prince Golitsyn was the Russian ambassador in England in the late 1750s and early 1760s. Later he served as a vice-chancellor of Catherine the Great.

Golitsyn, Michael Mikhailovich (1681-1764). Prince Golitsyn took part in the Northern War (1700-1721). From 1740 he was the governor-general of Astrakhan. From 1745 to 1748 he served as ambassador to Persia. Before his death he was the vice chancellor of Russia.

Golitsyn, Sergei. Russian envoy to Persia in 1734-1735, he was responsible for the negotiations, which led to the signing of the Treaty of Rasht (1735) and the Russian withdrawal back to the Terek. He was present at the siege of Ganja as well as at the election of Nāder as the new Shah of Persia. He remained in Astrakhan after his return from Persia.

Golovin, Fedor Alekseevich (1650-1706). Golovin was a Russian statesman and soldier, and a close confidant of Peter the Great. He was among Peter's entourage to Europe and was instrumental in forming the Russian navy. He was given the rank of general-admiral in 1699. By the eighteenth century he was in charge of the Collegium of Foreign Affairs and was considered by Europeans as the Prime Minister of Russia.

Golovin, Matthew Alekseevich. He was the brother of Fedor, who worked in the Department of Foreign Affairs. He had the rank of *stol'nik*, or a courtier below the rank of *boyar*.

Golovkin, Gabriel Ivanovich (1660-1734). Golovkin was a major diplomat during the reign of Peter the Great. In 1706 he became the head of the Collegium of Foreign Affairs. In 1709 he was named Chancellor of Russia, a post he held until his death.

Grigorii Lusikov (Grigor Lusikeants', son of Matt'ēos). A member of the Armenian Trading Company, he was the Shah's envoy to Russia and the other signatory to the first Russo-Armenian trade agreement in 1667.

Gudovich, Ivan Vasil'evich (1741-1820). General Gudovich was appointed the Commander of the Caucasian Line in 1791. In 1796 Catherine faulted him for the sack of Tiflis and replaced him with General Valerian Zubov. He was reinstated by Tsar Paul in 1797 and replaced by General Knorring in 1799. Following the death of Tsitsianov, Gudovich was, in 1806, named chief administrator of the Caucasus. He led an unsuccessful attack on Erevan in 1808 and was replaced by General Tormasov in 1809. He became a state counselor and retired in 1812.

Hājji Ćelebi. Ruler of Shakki and Shirvan in the mid-eighteenth century, Ćelebi hoped to establish himself as the main force in Transcaucasia. He had to deal with both Panāh Khan and Ebrāhīm Khan of Karabagh.

Hakob of Julfa. Kat'oghikos at Ējmiatsin (1655-1680). Hakob was born in Old Julfa and was taken to New Julfa during the forced deportations. He was well known to the Persian Armenians and had good relations with Shah 'Abbās II. He was a respected cleric and occupied the post of deputy during the absence of his predecessor, Kat'oghikos P'ilippos, from the Holy See. His reign witnessed a rift between the western and eastern Armenian religious hierarchies. When Armenians began to experience hard times under Persian rule (during the reign of Shah Soleimān), he secretly met with a number of meliks of Karabagh (1677) and planned to seek European aid in liberating Armenia. A delegation (which included Israel Ori), headed by him left for Rome in 1679. He died on the way in Constantinople and was buried there in 1680.

Hakob V of Shemakhi. Kat'oghikos at Ējmiatsin from 1759 to 1763. Hakob was the locum tenens of the Holy See since the death of Kat'oghikos Aghek'sandr II of Byzantium in 1755. After a number of candidates declined or procrastinated to come to the Holy See after being elected, the brotherhood and the patriarch of Constantinople appointed Hakob as the new kat'oghikos in 1759.

Hosein 'Alī Khan. He was the governor of Erevan from 1762-1783.

Hosein Khan Beg. Persian envoy to Moscow in 1695.

Hovakim of Julfa. In 1710 Kat'oghikos Aghek'sandr sent Bishop Hovakim as his representative and the prelate of the Armenians in Russia to Astrakhan and then on to Moscow. From there he was dispatched to Amsterdam and Venice. He was arrested by the Catholics and was a prisoner in Rome for five years. He escaped in 1716 and reached Moscow, via Amsterdam, in 1717. He was an enemy of Minas Vardapet, who (after 1716) considered himself the prelate of the Armenian in Russia. Minas accused Hovakim of being a spy and had him arrested. Hovakim died in a Kazan jail on 30 October 1720.

Hovhannēs XII, Hasan-Jalalean. Kat'oghikos of Aghuank' at Gandzasar (1763-1788). Hovhannēs, together with some of the Armenian meliks of Karabagh sought Russian aid against the Muslims. Hovhannēs was arrested by Ebrāhīm Khan of Shushi in 1786 and killed in 1788.

Hovnan Vardapet. He was the prior of the Surb Karapet Monastery in Mush. He met Emin during the latter's visit to Western Armenia. He kept in contact with Emin and maintained that Western Armenians were prepared to revolt against the Turks if they received aid from King Erekle II.

Hovsēp' (Yusup' or Yusuf) The Armenian melik of Gulistan. He was forced by the khan of Karabagh to leave his domain and settled in Georgia. He returned soon after and died sometime in 1783.

Iakoby, I. V. He was the governor of Astrakhan in the early 1780s.

Igumov, Il'ia. Russian consul at Enzeli in 1764.

Iunger, Andrei Tomasovich. Colonel Iunger was the commandant of Derbent from 1722 until 1736. From 1736 to 1738 he was the commandant of Astrakhan.

Ivan V. Russian Tsar. Ivan and Peter I were named co-rulers after the death of Fedor II in 1682. Ivan had a weak constitution and was frequently ill. Their sister, Sophia, who was the regent, however, was the real power behind the throne. In 1689 Peter removed her as regent and

assumed control of the state. Peter maintained Ivan's position as co-ruler until Ivan's death in 1696.

Ivan VI. Russian Tsar (1740-1741). Ivan was two months when Anna named him Tsar on her deathbed. He was the great grandson of Ivan V and a grandson of Anna's elder sister, who was also married to a German prince. His mother, with the help of her German advisors, acted as regent for a short time. In 1741 the daughter of Peter the Great, Elizabeth, overthrew Ivan and the entire German party.

Ĵavād Khan. The last khan of Ganja. Protected by Erekle, he shifted his allegiance fell in with Āġā Moḥammad Khan. He was killed in 1804 at the start the first Russo-Persian War.

Johann Wilhelm. He was the Elector of the Palatinate, who gave letters to Ori to be presented to Peter the Great and the meliks of Karabagh. He is sometimes referred to as the Elector of Bavaria (the Palatinate was at times part of Bavaria).

Kakhovskii, Michael and Vasili Vasil'evich. The Kakhovskii brothers (first Michael and then Vasili) were the governors of Ekaterinoslav Province from 1790 until 1797.

Kalushkin, Ivan. He was the Russian envoy in Persia in the 1730s.

Karapet, Ivan. He was the brother of Luke Shirvanov and the envoy of Peter the Great to the Armenian meliks of Karabagh. He arrived in 1723 with the mission to unite the local population against the Turks. He stayed in the region until 1729. He died in 1739.

Karīm Khan, Persian ruler (1750-1779). In the chaos that followed the death of Nāder, various military chiefs seized power. Karīm Khan, also known as Moḥammad Karīm became the sole ruler of southern Persia in 1750. Karīm never took the title of Shah, but reigned from Shiraz as *vakil* or regent for the surviving Safavid princes. His rule was one of clemency and moderation. His control over Transcaucasia and the southern Caspian shores was, at best, nominal.

Kasparov, Peter. An Armenian from the Crimea, he joined the Armenian Squadron in 1723. He commanded the unit after the death of Khristoforov in 1750. He died in Kizliar in 1760.

Khanykov, P. I. Admiral Khanykov was the commander of the Russian Flotilla in the Caspian Sea.

Khovanskii, Peter Ivanovich. Khovanskii was a boyar who was appointed as the *voevoda* of Astrakhan at the start of the eighteenth century. In 1705 he formed a special corps of noblemen to fight the rebels in Astrakhan.

Khristoforov, Bogdan. Armenian interpreter at the Collegium of Foreign Affairs in the 1720s.

Khristoforov (also known as Khristopor), Ivan. The emissary of the Armenians of Karabagh to Russia in the 1720s.

Khristoforov Lazar (Ghazar Khach'aturean, also known as Aghazar di Khach'ik, Lazar Akhzhhanov, and Okhzhakov). Born in New Julfa to a merchant family in 1690. A companion of Petros di Sarkis Gilanents', Lazar took over the Armenian Squadron after Petros' death in 1724. He increased the squadron to 600 men and maintained it mainly by his own resources. In 1734 he was promoted to the rank of major general (the first Armenian to receive this rank) for his devoted services to Russia and the Armenian Squadron. He died in Kizliar in 1750. It is not clear whether he was related to Bogdan Khristoforov or Ivan Khristoforov.

Klenk, Kondrat von. The Dutch envoy to Russia in 1676.

Kokh (Koch), F. Major Kokh was the commandant of Ekaterinoslav Fort.

Kozlovskii, Prince. Tsar Alexei's envoy to Persia in 1647.

Krechetnikov, P. N. He was the governor of Astrakhan in the early 1770s.

Kropotov. Major General Kropotov was the commandant of the Holy Cross Fort in the 1730s.

Kutuzov, Michael Illarionovich (1745-1813). General Kutuzov was the famed Russian commander and hero of the war against Napoleon. He participated in the storming of the fort of Izmail in December 1790 under the command of General Suvorov. From 1792 to 1794 he was the Russian ambassador-extraordinary in Constantinople.

Kuzanov Rafail Parsadanovich (Rafayēl Ghuzanents'). Kuzanov was an Armenian who founded the Georgian Squadron, which was composed of Armenians and Georgians living in Persia and Transcaucasia. The squadron joined the Russian army in the 1720s and was commanded by Kuzanov until 1745 when he was transferred to the Georgian Hussar Regiment. In 1742 he was given the rank of colonel. He died in 1750 and is buried in the Armenian cemetery in St. Petersburg.

Kuzanov, Taga (1694-1765). Brother of Rafail, he served in the Georgian Squadron. Later he joined the Russian army and was reached the rank of colonel.

Lazarev Family: The Lazarevs (Lazarean/Ghazarean) were wealthy Armenian merchants in Persia. Aghazar, son of Nazaret', who settled in Astrakhan in 1747, founded the Russian branch. In 1749 he and his family moved to Moscow, where he and his brother Khach'atur started a silk factory and other enterprises. Other members of the family soon left Persia for Russia. The family's wealth and influence not only brought them titles of nobility, but also enabled them to advance the cause of the Armenians in Russia and Transcaucasia. Some of the Lazarevs attained major posts in the army and government during the 19th century. Members of this family were also responsible for the establishment of the Lazarev Institute of Oriental Languages in Moscow (1815), where an Armenian press published books in Armenian and where one could study Armenian history and language.

Lazarev, Artemii (Aghazar, son of Nazaret'). Artemii came from Persia to Russia in 1747. He was the founder of the famed Lazarev family who became the leaders of the Armenians in Moscow and St. Petersburg dur-

ing the reign of Catherine the Great and played an important role in the annexation of eastern Armenia during the nineteenth century.

Lazarev, Ivan Lazarevich Count (Hovhannēs Lazarean or Ghazarean) [1735-1801]. Born in New Julfa, he became a prosperous merchant and a respected government official in Russia. He had access to the Russian Court and was a conduit for Armenian petitions to Catherine the Great and her administration.

Leopold I, (1640-1705, Holy Roman Emperor from 1657). The Hapsburg monarch was the overlord of Johann Wilhelm. He planned to push the Turks out of Europe, hence Peter the Great sent Israel Ori to his court in 1704 to discuss the matter further.

Lesi (Lessi or Lasi), Peter Petrovich (1678-1751). Count Field Marshall Lesi was an Irishman who had entered the service of Russia and took part in the Russo-Turkish War of 1735-1739. He was the commander-in-chief of the Russian forces during the Russo-Swedish War of 1741-1743.

Levashov, Vasilii Iakovlevich (1667-1751). General Levashov participated in the Northern War, as well as Peter's Caspian campaign. He was appointed as the governor of the Caspian provinces of Russia (Derbent, Baku, Gilan, Mazandaran, and Astarabad). He set up a Russian administration and was in close contact with the Armenian leaders in Transcaucasia. Following the Treaty of Ganja (1735), Levashov left the Caucasus. In 1741 he was once again stationed in the region.

Lialin, Anisim. Captain Lialin was in charge of a frigate in the Caspian Flotilla.

Lobanov-Rostovskii, Ivan. Tsar Alexei envoy to Persia in 1653.

Lusikov, Grigorii. A member of the Armenian Trading Company of New Julfa, Lusikov, together with Stepan Ramadamskii negotiated the commercial treaties (1667, 1673) with Russia. He acted as the envoy of Shah Soleimān to the Russian court (1671), seeking a Russo-Persian alliance against the Ottomans.

Mahmūd (1722-1725). He was the elder son of Mīr Vais. He murdered his uncle and became the head of the Ghalzai Afghans. He invaded Persia in 1719 but returned to restore order in Qandahar. He invaded Persia for the second time in 1721. In 1722 he had looted Julfa and had captured Isfahan after a long siege. Crowned Shah, he received Russian and Turkish envoys in 1723 and tried to consolidate his hold over all of Persia. He becomes deranged and died or was killed in 1725.

Mahmut I. Ottoman Sultan from 1730 to 1754.

Makarov, Alexei Vasil'evich. Private secretary of Peter the Great in the 1720s.

Martiros, Bishop. Armenian bishop of Derbent from the 1720s to the 1740s.

Matiushkin, Michael Afanas'evich (1676-1737). General Matiushkin participated in the Battle of Poltava (1709) and was one of the commanders of Peter during the Persian campaign. Upon his departure from Persia, Peter appointed him as the commander-in-chief of the Russian forces stationed on the Caspian shores.

Mazeppa (Mazepa), Ivan Stepanovich (1644-1709). Mazeppa was a son of a Ukrainian nobleman who was educated at the court of the Polish king. In 1687 he became the *hetman* of the Left-bank Ukraine. Hoping to obtain independence for his land, he conducted secret negotiations with Poland and Sweden promising a general revolt against Russia. In 1708 he openly joined Charles XII. The revolt did not materialize and following their defeat at Poltava, Charles and Mazeppa fled to the Turkish fort of Bendery.

Medem, I. F. General Medem was the commander of the Russian army of the Caucasus.

Mejлум, Melik. Armenian melik of the district of Jraberd in Karabagh. He was a member of the Israyēlean family.

Michael Fedorovich, Russian Tsar (1613-1645). To end the *Time of Troubles*, which began after the death of Ivan IV (the Terrible), the

service nobility convened a *Zemskii Sobor* in 1613. They elected the sixteen year old Michael Romanov, a member of the high nobility and a relative of the first wife of Ivan the Terrible, as the new Tsar. Acceptable to the peasants and merchants, Michael restored order and began the Romanov dynasty which was to last until 1917.

Minas Pervazean. Archbishop of Tiflis in the third decade of the 18th century.

Minas Vardapet (Minas Tigraneants'). Minas was born ca. 1658 and was one of the active clerics in Karabagh. In 1699 Minas was chosen by the meliks of Karabagh to accompany Ori on his mission to Europe and Peter the Great. Minas became Ori's confidant and traveled with him to Europe. In 1707, after Ori left for Persia, Minas remained in Russia and handed Ori's correspondence to Peter. After Ori's death in 1711, Minas continued to seek Russian aid to liberate his people. In 1716, Esayi Hasan-Jalalean consecrated him an archbishop and prelate of all Armenians in Russia, so that he could pursue his activities with greater authority. Minas made Astrakhan his headquarters. He sent Petros di Sarkis Gialents' to Rasht to collect and transmit information about Persia. In 1722, Minas accompanied the Russian army to Derbent and was active in recruiting Armenian volunteers into the Russian army. After the Russian withdrawal, he continued to petition Russia not to abandon the Armenians. A decade later he was a disappointed and broken man. By 1740, the destitute Minas converted to Russian orthodoxy and asked the government for a pension. He died in Moscow the same year.

Miron Vasil'ev Mustofin. Ori's confidant and envoy to the meliks of Karabagh.

Mīr Vais. He was the chief of the Ghalzai Afghans, who was arrested by Giorgi XI and sent to Isfahan as a prisoner. He convinced the Shah that he was innocent and was permitted to go on a pilgrimage to Mecca. While there he obtained a *fatwa* (ruling), which permitted his people, all Sunni, to rebel against the Shi'i Persians. He returned to Persia in 1708, just as Israel Ori had reached Shemakhi. Mīr Vais convinced the Shah that Peter the Great was planning to take over Armenia and Georgia with the help of Giorgi. He was sent back to Qandahar, where he killed Giorgi in 1709 and rebelled against the Shah. He died in 1715.

Mkhit'ar Bek (Mkhit'ar Sparapet). He was an associate of Davit' Bek who took over the command of the Ghap'anis after the latter's death. Mkhit'ar Bek was killed in action in 1727 in the village of Khndoresk.

Moḥammad 'Alī. The vizier of Rasht in 1725.

Moḥammad Khan Qajar. He was the khan of Erevan from 1784 to 1794. Āḡā Moḥammad Khan replaced him with 'Alī Qolī Khan Qajar. He was reinstated in 1796 and remained the khan of Erevan until 1805. He accepted Erekle's superior military strength and managed to keep most of his territory intact. He was a good politician and negotiated with Russia, Turkey, and Georgia, as well as neighboring khans, to keep himself in power. His cooperation with Russia and his procrastination in supporting the Persian army during the invasion of Erevan by Tsitsianov (1804) ended with his removal.

Moḥammad Ḥasan Khan Qajar. Father of Āḡā Moḥammad Khan. Following the death of Nāder, the Qajar khan wanted to gain control of Persia. He clashed with a number of rivals, including Karīm Khan, and was killed in battle.

Moḥammad Qolī Beg. Envoy of Shah 'Abbās II to Russia in 1650.

Morṭazā 'Alī. Son of Surkhai Khan of Kazi Kumuk. He invaded Transcaucasia in the late 1730s.

Morṭazā Qolī Khan. He was the half brother of Āḡā Moḥammad Khan, who, in 1784, sought refuge in Russia.

Münnich (Minikh in Russian) Khristofor Antonovich (Burkhard Kristof von) [1683-1767]. General, field marshal, Münnich was the president of the War Collegium from 1730. His rise was due to his friendship with Biron. He took part in the Russo-Turkish War of 1735-1739. He was exiled by Empress Elizabeth in 1742, but was recalled by Peter III in 1762. Like Ostermann, he favored the return of the Caspian provinces to Persia.

Musin-Pushkin, Ivan Alekseevich. He was the *voevoda* of Astrakhan, who put down rebellions in the region.

Nāder, Persian Shah (1736-1747). Nāder was a member of the Afshar tribe. He joined Shah Ṭahmāsp II and took the name of Ṭahmāsp Qolī. In 1729 he expelled the Afghans and restored the Safavids. In 1732, however, he deposed Ṭahmāsp and became the regent of Persia. By the end of 1735 he had driven the Turks out of northern Persia and Transcaucasia. In 1736 he was crowned Shah and ruled until he was murdered in 1747. Nāder had amiable relations with some of the meliks of Karabagh and Kat'oghikos Abraham of Crete. He took Qandahar, conquered Delhi and restored the Persian suzerainty over the territory of the Safavid Empire.

Nahapet I of Edessa (1691-1705), kat'oghikos at Ējmiatsin. In order to please the Armenians of Constantinople and create unity, the leaders of the Church in eastern Armenia elected Nahapet, a pupil of the former kat'oghikos, Eghiazar of Aynt'ap and his designated successor as supreme patriarch in 1691. The Armenians of Constantinople had their own candidate, however. Furthermore, a number of eastern bishops supported the election of Archbishop Step'anos, the prior of the All Savior Monastery of New Julfa and the prelate of Persia. In 1695 Step'anos obtained a *farmān* from Shah Solṭān Ḥosein recognizing him as kat'oghikos. Nahapet left Ējmiatsin but returned with the consent of the Shah in 1696 after Step'anos' failure to achieve wide recognition. Nahapet did not agree with Ori's actions and was viewed by Ori's followers as a servant of the Persians.

Nazarov, David (Nezarashvili). Prince Nazarov was an Armenian in the court of King Wakhtang VI. He took an active role in the Russo-Persian talks during the 1724-1726 period.

Nepliev, Ivan Ivanovich (1693-1773). Russian diplomat at Constantinople from 1721 to 1734. He played an important role in the 1724 treaty between Russia and the Ottomans. In 1735 he returned to St. Petersburg. He continued to play an active role in Russo-Turkish affairs and was involved in the talks following the 1735-1739 war with Turkey.

Neronov, Vasili. Governor of Astrakhan in 1762.

Nersēs V. He was the patriarch of Karabagh from 1706 to 1763. He resided at the Three Youths Monastery in the present-day Shahumian region of Karabagh. Part of his period in office coincided with Kat'oghikos Esayi's rule in Gandzasar (1702-1728). Some Church historians therefore consider him an anti-patriarch. From 1728 to 1763, however, he was the sole patriarch in Karabagh.

Nikorovic, Gregory. Polish-Armenian merchant who had a large importing business specializing in Oriental goods. He had branches in Lvov, Constantinople and other major cities. In 1746 the Polish king, Augustus III, sent him to Isfahan as his Commissioner. His son Shimon continued to run the firm after Gregory's death.

Obolenskii, Vasilii. Commandant of Kizliar from the mid 1740s to the mid-1760s.

Obreskov, A. M. Russian diplomat at Constantinople in the 1750s.

Ori, Israel (Orī, Israyēl) [1659-1711]. One of the most active participants in the Armenian liberation movement, Ori was the son of Melik Israyēl of Siwnik'. In 1677 he was among those chosen in a secret meeting in Ējmiatsin (or Erevan) to travel to Europe with the purpose of seeking aid for the liberation of Armenia from Muslim rule. Together with his father, Kat'oghikos Hakob of Julfa, and others left for Constantinople. The mission was abandoned in 1680 when Hakob died in Constantinople. Ori, with the help of Armenian merchants, went to Venice. In 1683 he went to Paris and joined the French army. Between 1688 and 1695 he took part in battles between France and England. In 1695 he was captured by the English, but managed to escape and reach the German principalities. By 1698 he had gained the rank of an officer and had joined the service of Johann Wilhelm of the Palatinate. Johann Wilhelm, who at the time was involved with a war against the Ottomans, was urged by Ori to accept the Armenian throne. Ori maintained that the Christians of the Caucasus, the Armenians and Georgians, were prepared to fight. Johann Wilhelm accepted Ori's proposal and gave him letters to the Georgian King Giorgi XI, the Armenian meliks, and the kat'oghikoses at Ējmiatsin and Gandzasar. Hoping to receive similar letters of support, Ori, in 1698, traveled to Vienna to seek audience with Emperor Leopold I, the Holy Roman Emperor and the overlord of Johann Wilhelm. Leopold, who was

in the middle of peace negotiations with the Turks, refused to see him. Ori left for Florence, met with Cosimo III, the Grand Duke of Tuscany and from there he returned to Armenia in 1699. Conditions had changed, however. The rebellious Giorgi had lost his throne and Kat'oghikos Nahapet, as well as Kat'oghikos Simēon IV (in Karabagh), did not support Ori's plans. Melik Safraz was the only person who was prepared to aid him. He gathered the eleven meliks of Siwnik' in Angeghakot' and in a meeting they composed letters to Johann Wilhelm (offering him the crown of Armenia), to the Grand Duke of Tuscany, to the Pope, to Peter the Great, asking them to help free Armenia. In 1699 Ori was dispatched back to Europe. He was accompanied by Vardapet Minas Tigraneants', who was the representative of the meliks and became Ori's assistant. In 1700 they met Johann Wilhelm, who accepted their offer and pointed out that any European army had to pass through Russia. He also reminded Ori that nothing would be accomplished without the armed struggle of the Armenians and Georgians. Ori then traveled to Vienna and received letters from Leopold I addressed to Peter. In 1701 Ori arrived in Moscow and soon became convinced that only Russia was capable of truly helping the Armenians. He submitted a plan by which a Russian army of 25,000 men would arrive in Transcaucasia from the Daryal Pass and the Caspian Sea. They would be met by thousands of Armenian and Georgian armed volunteers. On 29 July 1701, Ori and Minas met with Peter the Great, who promised them help following the conclusion of the Northern War. In March of 1702 Peter informed the Armenian meliks that Russia was committed to come to their rescue. Ori prepared a map of Armenia and decided to travel to Persia to ascertain the conditions of the region. Not wishing to arouse the suspicion of the Persians, Ori traveled to Rome in 1704 and managed to obtain the position of envoy of the Pope to Persia. In 1706 he returned to Russia and in 1707, accompanied by a large group, Ori set off for Persia. In 1708 he arrived in Isfahan but despite all his efforts, the Persians, warned by the French envoy and missionaries, remained suspicious of his activities and he had no choice but to leave in 1709. He stayed in the Caucasus for the next two years and kept in touch with Kat'oghikos Aghek'sandr I, Kat'oghikos Esayi of Gandzasar and the Armenian meliks. In 1711 he arrived in Astrakhan, where he died suddenly and was buried in the Armenian church there.

Ostermann (Osterman in Russian) Andrei Ivanovich (Heinrich Johann Friederich Ostermann) [1686-1747]. Ostermann was a German who en-

tered the Russian service in 1703. He was a tutor to Peter II and a close advisor to Empress Anna. He directed Russia's foreign and domestic policy throughout the 1730s. He was vice-president of the Collegium of Foreign Affairs from 1723 to 1725. He was vice-chancellor from 1725 to 1741. He lost his position with the ascension of Elizabeth and was exiled to Berezov, where he died.

Panāh Khan of Karabagh ca. 1748 to 1762. Member of the Ĵavānšīr clan, Panāh Khan was exiled to Khorasan by Nāder. He escaped, returned to Karabagh and slowly gained support of the various tribal chiefs in the region. He declared himself khan (1748) after the death of Nāder and spent the rest of his life consolidating his hold on Karabagh at the expense of the Armenian meliks.

Panin, Nikita Ivanovich (1718-1783). Count Panin was a close advisor to Catherine the Great and the head of the Collegium of Foreign Affairs from 1763 to 1781. He was a tutor to the future Tsar, Paul, and sought reforms for Russia. His foreign policy concentrated on isolating France and Austria by a Northern Accord between Russia, Poland, Prussia, England, Denmark, and Sweden. He was forced to retire in 1781 when he conspired to replace Catherine with her son Paul.

Panin, Nikita Petrovich: Nephew of Nikita Ivanovich, he started his military service in 1791. In 1795 he was named governor of Lithuania and received the rank of major general. He was in charge of the border demarcation between Russia and Prussia following the third partition of Poland. Like his uncle he favored Russia to join an anti-French coalition. He was named ambassador extraordinary to Berlin. He conspired against Paul when the later planned his rapprochement with France and fell into disgrace. Tsar Alexander I made him a major member of the Collegium of Foreign Affairs. He retired in 1801 and died in 1837.

Pervazean, Minas. He was the Armenian archbishop of Tiflis in the first half of the 18th century.

Peter I (the Great), Russian Tsar (1682/9-1725). Peter became actual ruler of Russia in 1689 and the sole monarch in 1696. The architect of modern Russia, Peter traveled to Europe twice and Westernized Russia. In 1713, he moved the capital from Moscow to St. Petersburg, his "Win-

dow to the West;" in 1721, he created the Holy Synod, which significantly reduced the power of the Russian Orthodox Church; and in 1725 he established the Academy of Sciences of Russia. He fought the Swedes, Turks, and Persians and extended the borders of Russia. His promises to the Armenians were instrumental in the formation of the Armenian liberation movement of the 18th century.

Peter II, Russian Tsar (1727-1730). Peter was twelve when he was named Emperor. He fell under the influence of Menshikov, who brought him to his residence and betrothed him to his daughter. Peter soon placed his confidence in Prince Ivan Dolgoruky. Menshikov was arrested and died in exile. Peter was then engaged to a Dolgoruky princess, but died of small pox at age fifteen, before his marriage.

Peter III, Russian Tsar (1762). Peter did not like Russia, but preferred Prussia. Upon the death of his mother, Empress Elizabeth, Peter tried to restore the German orientation of Russia with a vengeance. He withdrew Russia from the Seven Years' War, tried to disband the guards, and even demanded the removal of icons from churches and the dressing of Russian priests in Lutheran garb. A violent and unpredictable man, he was removed by his wife Catherine II and her Russian supporters.

Petros III. Kat'oghikos at Gandzasar from 1653 to 1675.

Potemkin, Grigorii Aleksandrovich (1739-1791). A favorite of Catherine II, he participated in the coup against Peter III and was appointed as a lieutenant in the guards. He was made a general following the Russo-Turkish War of 1768-1774. An able administrator, he was appointed in 1776 as the governor-general of Novorossiisk, Azov, and Astrakhan. Joseph II made him a prince of the Holy Roman Empire in 1776. In 1783 he succeeded in carrying the plan to annex the Crimea to Russia and was named prince of Tauride. He took part in the Russo-Turkish War of 1787-1792 and died in 1791 in Jassy during the peace negotiations.

Potemkin, Paul S. General Potemkin was the nephew of Prince Potemkin. He was sent to the Caucasus as the commander of the Russian forces.

Priklonskii, Andrei. Russian envoy to Shah Soleimān in 1671.

Pugachev, Emelian Ivanovich (ca. 1742-1775). A Don Cossack and a deserter, he led a rebellion against the authorities in 1773. Serfs, factory and mineworkers, Old Believers, Bashkirs, Tatars, and other minorities joined his Cossacks and created a significant force. Profiting from the Russo-Turkish War and the fear of local officials, Pugachev took Kazan and threatened Moscow. He claimed to be Peter III, organized an active chancellery and announced the extermination of officials and landlords, as well as freedom from serfdom, taxation, and military service for the people. His disorganized force was no match for the Russian army. Having been forced to conclude her war with the Ottomans (1774), Catherine's troops defeated Pugachev and in late 1774 he was handed over by his own men and executed in Moscow.

Ramadamskii, Stepan (Step'an, son of Movsēs). A merchant and nephew of Khoja Zak'ar Sarhadean, he was one of the two signatories to the Russo-Armenian trade agreements in 1667 and 1673.

Razin, Stenka (Stepan). Razin was a commander of a band of Don Cossacks. He began his raids in 1667 concentrating on the trade along the Volga. In 1670 he started a major rebellion, occupying towns and killing the upper classes. He took over Astrakhan in 1670 and made it his headquarters. His army of 20,000 men reached Simbirsk. His poorly trained soldiers were defeated, however, in 1671. He was seized by local authorities and sent to Moscow where he was executed in spring of 1671. Astrakhan, home to some of his subordinates, surrendered to Russian authorities in the summer of that year.

Reineggs, Jacob. Doctor Reineggs was a German adventurer who had gained a reputation as a medical man and a geologist. He was an ambitious man with political acumen, who in the 1780s hoped to obtain a major post in the future Russian administration of the Caucasus. Potemkin nominated him as the Russian representative in Tiflis, where he gained Erekle's confidence and sent numerous reports to Potemkin encouraging the Russian conquest of the region.

Rimskii-Korsakov, A. M. Russian general who took part in the Russo-Turkish wars of the late 18th century.

Romanov, Semen, see Aivaz, or Ivaz Avramov

Romodanovskii Fedor Iur'evich, Prince (ca. 1640-1717). He was the head of the Preobrazhenskii Prikaz and was in charge of the security of the State. During Peter's absences from Moscow (1695-1698), he was in control of the State and arrested those who opposed the Tsar's policies.

Rosenberg, K. von. Commandant of Astrakhan in 1767.

Rumianstsev, Alexander Ivanovich (1680-1749). General Rumiantsev was a companion of Peter the Great who accompanied him to Europe. He was a member of Peter's staff during the Persian campaign. In 1724 he was sent to Constantinople with the ratified copies of the 1724 treaty with the Turks. From 1728 to 1730 he was the governor of Baku and assisted General Vasilii Dolgorukov, the commander of the Russian forces in the Caucasus. In 1730 he was recalled to St. Petersburg. He returned in 1735 as the governor of Astrakhan and later as the governor of Kazan. In 1740 he was appointed as ambassador to Constantinople and in 1742 he conducted negotiations with Sweden.

Rumiantsev-Zadunaiskii, Peter Aleksandrovich (1725-1796). General Rumianstev-Zadunaiskii achieved fame in the Russo-Turkish War of 1768-1774 with his cavalry attacks.

Şafî I, Persian Shah (1629-1642). A generous but cruel ruler, Şafî was addicted to opium and wine and had little interest in the affairs of state. Two Georgians, Rustam Beg (the *beglerbegî* of Azerbaijan) and Rustam Khan (the *vālî* of K'art'li in Tiflis), exercised considerable power. His reign witnessed the loss of the fortress of Erevan in 1635 to the Ottomans and the city of Qandahar to the Mughals in 1638. The main political event of his time was the signing of the Treaty of Zohāb in 1639, which ended the conflict with the Ottomans and established the border between Persia and Turkey. The frontier survived beyond the end of the Safavid empire and—apart from the northern sector—has endured up to the present time.

Saltanov, Peter Samoilovich. He was the governor of Kazan in 1719.

Saltykov, Semen Andreevich. General and Count Satykov was the chairman of the Moscow Senate in the 1730s.

Sarafov, Moses (Movsēs Sarafean, also known as Moses Buniatov). A wealthy Armenian merchant and entrepreneur in the Astrakhan region during the second half of the eighteenth century. Following in Emin's footsteps, he proposed a plan to Catherine for the liberation of Armenia.

Sarhadov, Zakar (Zak'ar Sarhadean). One of wealthiest *khojas* of New Julfa and a founder of the Armenian Trading Company. He initiated the negotiations for the Russo-Armenian trade agreement in 1659 by entering Russia and by presenting fabulous gifts, including the Almazi Throne to Tsar Alexei in 1660.

Schröder, Johann Joachim (Shrederus, Yohannes Joachimus) (1680-1756). A German linguist at the University of Marburg from 1712 to 1756. In 1707 he was in Moscow and traveled to Persia in the company of Ori. He wrote the *Thesarirus lingue Armeniace*, which was printed in Amsterdam in 1711.

Serebrov, Aver'ian Grigor'evich. Wrote an important historical survey of Daghestan at the end of the eighteenth century. He included ethnographic data on the peoples and religions of Daghestan and Transcaucasia.

Shafirov, Peter Pavlovich (1669-1739). Shafirov was a major diplomat during the reign of Peter the Great. He served under Golovin, who in 1704 made him his private secretary. In 1709, Golovkin made him vice-chancellor. He was vice-president of the Collegium of Foreign Affairs from 1717 to 1722. He accompanied Peter on his second trip to Europe. In 1732 he negotiated the Treaty of Rasht with Persia.

Shahamirean, Shahamir. Shahamir was born in New Julfa in 1723. He moved to Madras in the 1740s and became a successful merchant. He was the major exponent of education as a tool for Armenian self-awareness. In the early 1770s Shahamir, together with a number of Armenian merchants, established an Armenian press in Madras and sent funds for the establishment of a press at Ējmiatsin. Shahamir employed

Movsēs Baghramean, of Karabagh, to teach Armenian to his sons and was thus aware of Emin's work. His son Hakob, together with Movsēs, published a number of booklets. Most important of these was the *New Booklet Called Exhortation*, which encouraged Armenian youth to work hard for the liberation of their land from Muslim rule. A second noteworthy work written by Shahamir and published fifteen years later by his other son Eghiazar, was the *Book Called Snare of Glory*, which is in essence a draft of the constitution of a future Armenian state. Shahamir was in constant contact with the Armenians in Russia and Transcaucasia. Treaty of Georgievsk (1783) made Russia and Georgia more prone to receiving aid from the Armenians. Archbishop Argutinskii, a major proponent of Russian expansion into Transcaucasia, must have heard of Emin's and Shahamir's efforts. He began corresponding with Shahamir in 1785. By 1787 Shahamir began corresponding with Kat'oghikos Ghukas and King Erekle II. The correspondence, as well as financial contributions continued until Shahamir's death in 1797.

Shahnazar, Melik. Melik of Varanda and son of Melik Hosein. His daughter was one of the wives of Ebrāhīm Khan. He did not cooperate with the other meliks until the very end, when he also sought Russian protection.

Shahvardi Khan. Member of the Qajar tribe, Shahvardi was the khan of Ganja. His family was the hereditary khans of Ganja for over a century and remained in power until the Russian conquest of Ganja in 1804.

Sheikh 'Alī Khan. Son of Fath 'Alī Khan of Derbent, who tried to restore his father's domain to its former strength.

Sheremetev, Vladimir. Governor of Smolensk at the beginning of the 18th century.

Shipov, Nicholas Mokhailovich. He was the commander of two Russian battalions in Gilan.

Shirvanov, Luke (Ghukas Shirvanents'). Luke was the brother of Ivan Karapet. He was a major Armenian merchant who lived in St. Petersburg and traded mainly with Persia. He was actively involved in the Armenian life in Moscow and St. Petersburg and founded silk works in Kizliar.

Shuvalov, Peter Ivanovich (1710-1762). General, field marshal Shuvalov was one of those who played a major role in Empress Elizabeth's ascension to the throne. He was named senator in 1744 and played an active role in the Russian internal policy during the 1750s. He took an active part in the reorganization of the army on the eve of the Seven Years' War. He did a great deal to modernize the artillery and developed the "secret howitzer" and the "unicorn howitzer." He also engaged in trade.

Simēon IV. Armenian patriarch at the monastery of The Three Youths in Karabagh (1675-1701). He is listed as anti-patriarch in some sources.

Simēon of Erevan. Kat'oghikos at Ējmiatsin from 1763 to 1780. Author of *Jambr* and founder of the printing press at Ējmiatsin, Simēon managed to keep the Holy See safe by maintaining good relations with Erekle II, the ruler of Georgia and overlord of eastern Transcaucasia. An energetic administrator, Simēon also established a paper mill, created the patriarchal archives, organized a religious college, and revised the liturgical calendar. His precise survey of the landed property of the Holy See and his court battles with the Muslims reclaimed much usurped Church property.

Simonnaire, Peter. A Frenchman, who was the main clerk, paymaster, and interpreter of Ori's group.

Sofia (Regent of Russia) (1682-1689). Sister of Peter the Great, she ruled as regent and tried to take over the throne with the help of the *streltsy*. She failed and was sent to a convent in 1689. She tried another coup in 1697 and failed again. She was then forced to become a nun.

Soimonov, Fedor Ivanovich (1682-1780). Russian historian, cartographer, and navigator, Soimonov had the rank of vice-admiral and served as vice-president of the Navy Collegium. He was commissioned to survey the Caspian littoral and wrote a monograph on the subject. In 1740 he was accused of plotting against Empress Anna's foreign advisors, was deprived of his position and exiled. Empress Elizabeth restored him and named him governor of Siberia in 1741.

Soleimān, Persian Shah (1666-1694). Also known as Šafī II, Soleimān's reign although peaceful, witnessed the decline of the Safavid state. The Shah stayed in the harem, while the grand vizier ruled the country. Eunuchs and other harem elements spread corruption and bribery. Trade seems to have suffered and Armenian merchants left Persia in droves. In general Armenians experienced a harder time under his reign and began to look elsewhere for protection.

Soltān Hōsein, Persian Shah (1694-1722). Like his father, Shah Soleimān, Hōsein was raised in the harem. Totally inept in ruling, he concentrated on religion and spent his time in prayer. The already weakened state reached a position of total decline and was conquered by the Afghans in 1722.

Spafarii (Spofari-Milesku), Nicholas. He was one of the main interpreters at the Department of Foreign Affairs. He translated Ori's correspondence with the Russian court.

Stakhiev, Andrei S. He was the Russian ambassador to Constantinople in 1781.

Stepanov, Grigorii (Grigor, son of Step'an). An Armenian from Kamenets-Podol'sk (Poland), Stepanov reached Karabagh, via Moscow and Baku, in 1728. He joined the Armenian fighters, rose to the rank of colonel, and stayed in the region until 1730.

Stepanov, Vasilii. Member of the State Privy Council and part of the negotiating team which signed the Russo-Persian Treaty of 1723 in St. Petersburg. The treaty awarded Russia Gilan, Mazandaran, and Astarabad. Persia never ratified the treaty.

Struys, Jan. Dutch traveler to Russia and Persia in the early 1670s.

Stupishin, Alexei. Major-General Stupishin was the commandant of Kizliar in 1762.

Sukhotin, A. General Sukhotin was commander of the Russian army of the Caucasus.

Suvorov, Alexander Vasil'evich (1729/1730-1800). General Suvorov was a famous Russian military commander and theorist. He defeated the Turks in a number of battles in 1773-1774. He was asked by Prince Potemkin to prepare the Russian invasion of Transcaucasia and corresponded with Armenian leaders.

Ṭahmāsp II, Persian Shah (1722-1732). Son of Shah Solṭān Ḥosein, he escaped from Isfahan and tried to restore his family to the throne. He tried to end the Turkish invasion of Persia by making a deal with Russia. He also relied on the Qajar and Afshar tribes to maintain his power. His lack of military experience forced him to rely heavily on Nāder, who, after he expelled the Afghans, installed Ṭahmāsp on the Safavid throne. In 1732 Nāder deposed the weak Shah and for all intents and purposes ended the Safavid dynasty.

T'arkhan Yüzbaşı (Tarkhan Isakhanov). An Armenian commander from Karabagh, T'arkhan led his own group under the general command of Avan Yüzbaşı. He fought Persian and Turkish troops until 1728. In 1729, he, together with Avan, went to Baku to seek military aid from General Rumiantsev. T'arkhan was sent to St. Petersburg to present the Armenian case and remained in Russia. In 1743 T'arkhan was awarded the rank of major.

Tchavtchavadze (Chavchavadze), Garsevan. Prince Tchavtchavadze was one of the Georgian plenipotentiaries who negotiated the Georgievsk treaty in 1783. He served a number of years as the Georgian minister in Russia and in 1795 he was once again sent to Russia to seek Russian aid against Āḡā Moḥammad Khan's threat. He asked if Russia was willing to abide by the terms of the Georgievsk treaty. He was a member of the team who went to St. Petersburg in 1800 to voluntarily submit Georgia to Russia. In 1801 he protested against Tsar Alexander's unilateral annexation of Georgia.

T'eimuraz I (1606-1616, 1623-1632, 1634-1648). King of Kakhet'i. T'eimuraz's reign coincided with that of 'Abbās the Great. The Persians, unhappy with Georgian overtures to the Turks and Russians, invaded the region, razed towns, and took numerous prisoners. After the death of 'Abbās, T'eimuraz had to deal with a Georgian apostate (Rostom, who later reverted back to Christianity), who with Persian help occupied Ti-

flis and tried to extend his control over the rest of eastern Georgia. In 1658, he traveled to Moscow but received no aid from the Russians.

T'eimuraz II, King of Kakhet'i (1732-1744) and King of K'art'li (1744-1762). Father of Erekle II. Taking advantage of the Perso-Turkish wars, T'eimuraz began the unification of eastern Georgia. In 1760 he traveled to St. Petersburg to request Russian aid against Persia. Russia, busy with the Seven Years' War, refused. He died on his return journey and is buried in Astrakhan next to his father-in-law, Wakhtang VI.

Tekelli, P. A. General Tekelli was the commander of the Caucasian Line in 1788

Ter-Sahakean, Step'an (Saakov, Sagakov, or Stepan Saakovich Popov). He was the envoy of the kat'oghikos of Ėjmiatsin and the Armenian secular leaders to Argutinskii, who sent him to St. Petersburg to advance the Armenian case.

Tolstoi, Peter Andreevich (1645-1729). Russian envoy to the Ottoman Empire from 1701 to 1714. Senator and head of Department of Commerce from 1714 to 1718. He accompanied Peter on his second trip to Europe. Given the title of Count, Tolstoi was promoted to chief of Peter's Privy Council. In 1727 Peter II exiled him to the Solovetskii Monastery, where he died. In 1722, the Tsar sent Peter's son, Ivan, to Wakhtang VI to sway the Persians to give up the Caspian littoral to Russia.

Totleben, G. G. General Totleben was the commander of the Russian army of the Caucasus in the 1770s.

Tumanovskii, Ivan. He was the Russian Consul in Rasht from 1780 to 1784.

Turchaninov, Peter Ivanovich. Member of Catherine the Great's council.

Turkistanov (Turkestanishvili), Boris. Georgian noble in the service of Russia. He rose to the rank of lieutenant colonel. He acted as Peter's envoy to Wakhtang VI and took an active part in the Russo-Georgian and

Russo-Armenian plans to cooperate against the Muslims. He died in 1735.

Ukraitsev, E. I. (1641-1708). He was one of the main secretaries of the Collegium of Foreign Affairs and later became Russian envoy to the Ottoman Empire. He negotiated the treaty of 1700 between Russia and the Ottoman Empire, which gave Russia Azov and permitted her to maintain a resident minister at Constantinople.

Voeikov, F. M. Governor-General of Kiev in 1769.

Volkonskii, Prince. The *voevoda* of the Terek region in 1697.

Volynskii, Artemii Petrovich (1689-1740). Volynskii was the Russian ambassador to Persia from 1715 to 1717. He negotiated a treaty (ratified in 1720) which permitted Russian merchants the freedom to safely trade in all of Persia. His real mission, however, was to gather information for the Russian penetration into the Persian Caspian and Transcaucasian regions. He served as the governor of Astrakhan from 1719 to 1724. In 1737 he was part of the negotiating team in the peace talks with Turkey. In 1738 he was named a cabinet minister. He was accused of plotting against Empress Anna and her foreign advisors and was executed in 1740.

Vorontsov, Michael Illarionovich (1714-1767). Russian statesman and diplomat, Vorontsov was actively involved in raising Elizabeth to the throne. In 1744 he became the vice-chancellor of Russia. After the demise of Bestuzhev-Riumin (1758), he was named chancellor and served in that post until 1762. A supporter of Peter III, he retired in 1763.

Wakhtang VI. Regent K'art'li from 1703 to 1711. King from 1711 to 1714. Nominally converted to Islam (as Hōsein Qolī Khan), he was reinstated by the Persians in 1719 and ruled until the Turkish invasion of 1723. Hoping to unite with the Russian forces in the Caucasus, Wakhtang abandoned the Persians and ignored the Turkish threat. He was in touch with the meliks of Karabagh, the kat'oghikos at Gandzasar, and Davit' Bek and agreed to cooperate with them against the Muslims. Following the Russo-Turkish agreement in 1724, Peter ordered the governor of Astrakhan to offer Wakhtang sanctuary in Russia. In August of that

year, the king, his queen, and two sons, together with 1186 members of the Georgian nobility and clergy crossed into Russia. He died in Astrakhan in 1737.

Wakhusht. Son of Wakhtang VI, who together with his father sought asylum in Russia in 1724.

Zhukov, M. M. Governor of Astrakhan 1784

Zinov'ev, Pavel (Poghos Zenents', son of Petros). He was born in 1687; there is no information of his birthplace or date of his death (although he was still alive in 1751). He entered Russian service in 1722 with 76 (some sources have 79) men and joined General Matiushkin's forces in Sulak. He spent the next fourteen years in the Caucasus and took part in various operations. In 1737 he was transferred to the southern front, where he fought the Turks under the command of General Münnich and took part in the taking of Ochakov. In 1750 he returned to Astrakhan. He had two sons, Peter and Fedor. Peter served in the Siberian Corps with the rank of corporal.

Zubov, Platon Aleksandrovich (1767-1822). Count Zubov became one of the favorites of Catherine the Great and was made Governor of Novorossiisk Province and the commander in chief of the Black Sea fleet.

Zubov, Valerian. Brother of Platon, he was the general who was put in charge of the Russian campaign against Persia (1796), following the sack of Tiflis in 1795. He replaced Gudovich who was blamed for the Georgian fiasco. In 1797 Emperor Paul replaced him with Gudovich.

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